THE EFFECTS OF VIDEO VIOLENCE ON YOUNG MALE OFFENDERS

by

AMANDA ELIZABETH PENNELL

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the assertion that young male offenders prefer watching violent videos because of their aggressive tendencies. Groups of 54 violent offenders, 28 non-violent offenders and 40 school/college students, aged between 15 and 21 years were compared. Each participant was interviewed about their viewing habits and preferences. Behavioural reactions to watching a new violent video film were monitored as well as impressions and memories of the film immediately after, at 3-4 months and 9-10 months later. Participants were also psychometrically assessed for anger, empathy and moral maturity.

Offenders were more likely to prefer violent films and were directly observed to show greater approval and interest in violent scenes than non-offenders. Ten months after viewing a violent video, twice as many offenders as non-offenders recalled and identified with 'bad' characters. Offenders had lower levels of moral maturity and empathy for others than non-offenders. They were also more likely to have aggressive temperaments and distorted perceptions about violence. The childhood background of violent offenders indicated that they had both witnessed and suffered physical abuse by their parents more often than the other two groups. The findings suggest that individuals from violent families are more prone to offending behaviour and a preference for violent film. This in turn may increase the frequency of their antisocial acts.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This thesis presents the findings from a study examining the effects of video film violence on young offenders. However, the influence of media violence, certainly cannot be described as a novel area to research as this would be easily contested by the vast array of literature available, which stretches back throughout the years. The aim of this introduction is not to extensively discuss previous studies as this has been achieved in the literature review in Chapter 1. Instead, this opening chapter offers a historical perspective of the subject area and an explanation into why this particular research was undertaken in what must seem as an already overly-subscribed area of debate. Finally, this introduction presents a brief overview of the layout of the thesis on a chapter by chapter basis to provide a clear and chronological synopsis of what is about to be read.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Historically, it would seem that media-related activities have always come under close scrutiny and been blamed for violence in society. From the 16th to the 19th century, a whole host of media amusements; songs, newspapers and theatres were blamed for crime and delinquency (Cumberbatch, 1994). With the introduction of each new source of media, there has always been a focus on the negative effects especially in relation to increases in crime rates. In the mid 19th century, the arrival of comic books ('penny dreadfulls') were blamed as culprits for causing crime and now in the 20th century, the same notoriety for their damaging influence is evident for horror comics, televised and videoed media, cinema films (Cumberbatch, 1994) and in these technologically-advanced modern times, it is now discussed in relation to the effects of video games and the availability and acquisition of images via the Internet.

In relation to the subject of this thesis, the area of importance in the above overview, is the introduction of televised and film media or more specifically, video films. Again, this aspect of media is not something that has arisen in the last few years, although specific events have thrown the debate in the public arena once again. Perhaps the most prominent of these was the murder of James Bulger in 1993 and the alleged connections made between aspects of this brutal murder and scenes within a fictional video film ("Child's Play 3"). Despite there being no conclusive proof that the two boys who committed the crime had even seen the film, people once again began to question what exactly was the influence of video films?

This concern and the debate surrounding the issue revisits earlier debates resulting from the emergence of films such as "Clockwork Orange" in 1972 and in the 1980's of a number of videos banned by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) for their displays of extreme violence.

In relation to the former example, "Clockwork Orange", this film has been banned within the UK by the director Stanley Kubrick who withdrew the film after public outrage about its violent content and has never given permission to re-release the film. The film's storyline revolves around a man named Alex who is the leader of a gang of thugs (known as 'droogs') who spend their time fighting, raping and murdering people. Blame was placed on the film for crimes occurring during the period after its release as people were said to be identifying with the characters (including dressing in their distinctive style) and imitating their violent behaviour.

In the second instance, the 1980's brought about the existence of a series of videos collectively termed video nasties and included titles such as "DrillerKiller" and "I Spit on your Grave". The emergence of these films led to the introduction of the Video Recordings Act (1984) which meant that all videos had to be classified by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). This will be discussed further in the "Current Censorship and Control" section below.

To bring the historical overview up to date, it can be seen by the delay and debate over the release and certification of Oliver Stone's "Natural Born Killers" ("NBK") in 1995 by the BBFC and the alleged connections made between this film and a number of murders following its release and

between "Child's Play 3" and the murder of James Bulger in 1993, that there is still much moral concern over what is acceptable to be seen on our screens.

CURRENT CENSORSHIP AND CONTROLS

In the UK, the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), as the designated authority, deals with violence in film and video, together with other matters of taste and decency (eg: sexual imagery), primarily through classification according to age-related categories.

As the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST Briefing Note 44, 1993) explains, video recordings are covered by the Video Recordings Act (1984) which requires any video supplied to have been classified by the BBFC. The law makes it illegal to supply videos to anyone below the age of the classification restriction. The law also requires the designated authority to give consideration to the likelihood of home viewing of video films and to apply tighter standards than at the cinema in relation to offensiveness and five major categories of harm; criminal behaviour, the use of illegal drugs, violent behaviour, horrific behaviour and sexual imagery.

Policy decisions for cinema and video films are the responsibility of the Home Office, whilst films broadcast on television and satellite are the responsibility of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. However, only films scheduled for cinema and video release are pre-viewed. As a result of the Broadcasting Act (1990), those authorities responsible for films on television and satellite are not required to preview programmes but only to follow up complaints from individuals or organisations and where it believes that there has been a breach in the codes of practice for programming.

CURRENT RESEARCH ETHOS AND AIMS

Despite the focal concern being the effects of violent films on children, previous research has shown that children are not the only ones considered to be vulnerable to violent films. Various factors have been identified which can lead to the development of a deviant personality which in turn can lead to an individual distorting what they see on the screen. It is believed that for these people, watching violent screen images is potentially harmful (Browne, 1995).

As factors linked to delinquency and crime such as poverty, one-parent families, a lack of parental affection and severe physical punishment (Browne and Herbert, 1997), have also been linked to a susceptibility to screen images (Vine, 1994), the focus of this thesis is on young offenders. This is with the aim of determining if young people who are convicted of committing a crime do interpret film violence differently from young people who have no criminal convictions and if there is a difference in interpretation between people who have committed violent crimes and those who have committed non-violent crimes.

Violent video film material was chosen as opposed to any other form of media material as fictional films offer the greatest range of interpretation for the viewer and can be used to determine what meanings and importance people ascribe to different scenes. The video format was the most convenient method to carry this out on an offender population who were incarcerated at the time of study.

The aims of the study were to determine the differences between violent young offenders, non-violent young offenders and non-offenders in relation to the following:

1) The choice of video and film material watched

2) The scenes and characters identified within a film

3) What is remembered or forgotten from a violent video film both immediately after viewing and over an extended time period

4) What is remembered from a violent video film in relation to childhood experiences and previous and current offending

OVERVIEW OF THESIS

This thesis is designed to discuss the effects of video film from a number of different perspectives which reflect the diverse nature of the methods and sources of information utilised within the study.

Chapter One introduces the concept of film violence by reviewing the relevant literature, firstly from a general stance on television and film violence and the audience as a whole and then by tailoring the research to studies specifically on the effects of film on young offenders.

Chapter Two details the methods and procedures carried out throughout the thesis. This is written for the design of the study as a whole, although methods for the relevant chapters are reiterated within each consecutive chapter.

As research has identified that the predisposition to be aggressive is of paramount importance in explaining why some people are more vulnerable to screen images than others, Chapter Three discusses the issue of what makes an individual aggressive, under the heading "Characteristics and Psychological Assessments of Young Offenders and Non-Offenders"

Chapter Four determines the viewing habits of the participants which were compared to the results of a previous study on young offenders and school children by Hagell and Newburn (1994). This chapter discusses viewing habits in relation to family violence as this was found to

be an influencing factor on programme choice and time spent viewing television.

Chapter 5 is a description of a study based on direct observation of participants while viewing a violent video film. This was to determine the behavioural influence of violent screen material during the actual viewing of the film. All behaviours were recorded using a computer which was linked to the timing of the film so that different scene types could be matched to the behaviours being displayed at that specific time.

However, the cognitive and emotional influence of the violent film was also explored in Chapter 6 through the use of questionnaires in an interview. These were administered both immediately after the film was viewed and at follow-up up to ten months later. It was therefore possible to distinguish both short and long term influences by comparing information from the relevant interviews.

A qualitative analysis of responses is given in Chapter 7 which makes it contrastable to the preceding chapters which describe a quantitative analysis of the results. Chapter 7 examines the influence of context on the viewer's perceptions of violence and discusses this in relation to the characters in the film as this has been previously shown to be of paramount importance in how people will perceive and justify screen violence (Gunter, 1985).

Chapter 8 discusses the participants' self-reported delinquency which was measured at the follow-up interviews. This is to determine if there has been a change in delinquency since the offenders were in prison and to assess whether the offenders are more likely to have committed various types of delinquency during their lifetime than non-offenders.

A discussion of the thesis as a whole is given in Chapter 9 by drawing together all the preceding chapters and offering a theoretical model based on these findings. In addition, implications for secure institutions are suggested in line with the results discussed. Finally, overall conclusions are drawn to summarise the discussion chapter.

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FILM VIOLENCE AND YOUNG OFFENDERS

Amanda E. Pennell and Kevin D. Browne

School of Psychology, University of Birmingham and Glenthorne Youth Treatment Centre, Birmingham

ABSTRACT. *Recent assertions have been made that viewing violent material on film and video may influence children and adolescents who commit violent acts. It has also been proposed that heavy exposure to television violence in childhood is associated with violent crime as an adult, although others have emphasized that experiencing "real" violence as a child has a much greater effect on aggressive predispositions. Ways in which screen violence can effect behavior includes: imitation of violent roles and acts of aggression, triggering aggressive impulses in predisposed individuals, desensitizing feelings of sympathy towards victims, creating an indifference to the use of violence, and creating a frame of mind that sees violent acts as a socially acceptable response to stress and frustration. It is argued that young offenders may like violent videos because of their aggressive background and behavioral tendencies. Whether such tastes reinforce violent behavior and increase the frequency of aggressive acts and antisocial behavior is open to question. This question needs an urgent answer given the availability of violent video film either to be viewed in the home environment appropriately (i.e., the whole film in real time) or inappropriately (i.e., from one violent scene to the next viewed in slow motion and freeze-frame).* © *1998 Elsevier Science Ltd*

KEY WORDS. Film effects, viewing violence, young offenders, aggressive behavior

OVER THE PAST 3 years, the debate as to whether violence in the media has a damaging impact on its audience has once again come to the forefront of people's minds. Certain events have again generated an academic and clinical interest in the effects of viewing violent imagery. One event was the release of Oliver Stone's film "Natural Born Killers" ("NBK") in 1995. Despite the film being screened all around the Western World without a second thought, it was delayed in the UK for 3 months. This delay was due to "much moral debate while the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) investigated claims that it had inspired copy killings" (Petre, 1995; *Sunday Telegraph*, February 26). The BBFC, as the board responsible for classifying, cutting, and in some cases, banning cinema and video films (since the UK Video Recordings Act, 1984), were investigating the reported

Correspondence should be addressed to Amanda Pennell, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT, United Kingdom.

allegations that up to 10 killings had been linked to the "NBK" film. For example, in Dallas, a 14-year-old boy decapitated a young girl after seeing the film and told friends that he wanted to be famous like "the natural born killers in the movie." In Paris, a pair of students went on a killing spree inspired by the film, and in Utah, a young man killed two people, which the local police thought was prompted by the film (*The Guardian*, March 4, 1995).

In the UK, the whole debate had already been highlighted with the murder of James Bulger by two 10-year-old boys. Here again, violent films, especially "Child's Play 3" and "Juice," were implicated in the Bulger case, the murder of Suzanne Capper, and the kicking to death of Les Read (*The Guardian*, November 27 and December 22, 1993). The similarity between certain aspects of these crimes, and parts of the video films, made people believe that these violent films had *caused* individuals concerned to commit terrible crimes. Indeed, the trial judge for the James Bulger case, "voiced his strong suspicion that exposure to violent videos played a strong part in corrupting the two boys concerned" (Association of Chief Police Officers, 1994, p. 22).

The claims from individuals and the British tabloid newspapers' obsessive wish to link James Bulger's murder to a violent video film were criticized heavily, and these allegations were actually unfounded by closer examination of the above three named cases.

Earl Ferrers told the House of Lords, "the police reports did not support the theory that those crimes had been influenced by exposure either to any particular video, or to videos in general, and no evidence about the role of video was presented in any of the prosecutions" (HL Deb. 6/14/94, cited in the Home Affairs Committee, 1994, p. vi). Indeed, it has been argued that "it is as silly to blame a single film as it is to indict the Bible" which forensic researchers have found to be the single most frequently quoted justification used by "noble-cause" killers who are pathological murderers of prostitutes and homosexuals (*The Guardian*, March 4, 1995).

Vine (1995) makes the suggestion that some people are struggling so hard to find an answer as to why two 10-year-old boys would brutally torture and kill a toddler that in desperation they make a rash judgement that videos *caused* the crimes. Gauntlett (1995), the author of a new study at the University of Leeds, says television is being irresponsibly blamed for societal problems. Others claim it is dangerous to over-simplify and ignore the complex causes of antisocial behavior, such as growing up in a violent home or living in a violent community.

Despite this, Newson (1994a, 1994b) strongly believes there is an established causal relationship between violent videos and criminal behavior. Her report, "Video Violence and the Protection of Children" (Newson, 1994a), was cited by David Alton MP in support of his proposed Amendment to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill. This amendment would have meant tighter restrictions on videos that were considered to be psychologically damaging to children. However, as James Ferman, director of the BBFC said, "the amendment would have resulted in the banning of films such as 'Schindlers List' from video on the grounds that it presented a bad role model for children" (Douglas, 1995; *Radio Times*, May 27–June 6). The UK Government decided to reject David Alton's proposal and re-examine the issue in order to make their own amendments. The Home Affairs Committee (1994) commissioned several experts from the relevant fields of psychology, communication research, and organizations involved in the protection of children to give evidence on this debate for a special report, "Video Violence and Young Offenders."

WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?

On this point, researchers are somewhat divided with two schools of thought being diametrically opposed (Vine, 1995). At one end of the scale there are "media pessimists."

These are the experts, who like Newson (1994b), believe that television or screen violence can be very harmful and in the most extreme cases can be a causal factor in aggressive and violent criminal acts. At the other end are the "media sceptics," who among others include Cumberbatch and Howitt (1989), "whose beliefs that there is no evidence of harm have been well known and widely publicized over a period of 25 years" (Itzin, 1994, p. 62).

Somewhere between these two extremes are various points on the continuum where the evidence of a link varies in strength: 1) there is some correlation between video violence and actual violence but it is not causal (e.g., Vine, 1994); 2) there is a strong link, but only for those predisposed to being aggressive (e.g., Browne, 1995); and 3) certain genres of films and the type of violence have a differential impact on the audience behaving aggressively (e.g., Gunter & Furnham, 1984).

Therefore, it is important to discuss some of this research to illustrate how, if at all, it is believed that television and film violence can influence the audience. However, it is necessary to point out two fundamental limitations. First, the majority of studies examine the broader concept of television violence rather than video violence which is more explicit. Second, the audience studied is usually a sample from the general population rather than concentrating on groups that may be more vulnerable to the effects of violence in the media, such as young offenders.

Research has looked at all types of media in all kinds of ways with the main types of studies including: program content analyses, laboratory experiments, field experimental studies, field interviews and surveys, naturalistic studies, and longitudinal studies in the field (see Table 1). A full explanation of these approaches along with their advantages and disadvantages can be seen in various reviews (e.g., Cumberbatch, 1995; Strasburger, 1995; Wober, 1989). In 1982, the National Institute of Mental Health listed over 1,000 published research findings in this field. As Cumberbatch (1994, p. 492) states, "violence has probably been the most researched topic in the vast literature on mass communications."

Effects of Violence on Television

The American Psychological Association claims that the average American child or teenage views 10,000 murders, rapes, and aggravated assaults per year on television alone (Huston et al., 1992). So what kind of impact does this kind of viewing material have?

Meta-analysis is a procedure which combines summary data collected from a group of studies to calculate average effect size. This type of analysis has been applied to a large proportion of studies and supports the finding that aggressive or anti-social behavior can be increased after watching violent television (Strasburger, 1995). For example, Andison (1977) found that in 77% of studies, media violence was linked to aggression in the audience. Paik (1991) also found that in a dozen studies, media violence could be linked with cases of burglary, theft, and criminal violence. Comstock's (1991) main conclusion in his review of more than 1,000 studies was that although some group and cultural distinctions appear, a positive association between violent entertainment and aggressive behavior was evident.

However, as the critics have pointed out, associations between aggression and media violence are quite distinct from causal relationships and this must be kept in mind. Itzin (1994) writes, "correlation does not prove causality. It never can. Causality is a standard of proof that rarely, if ever, can be achieved, and is barely, if ever, required." However, correlation is itself evidence.

Longitudinal studies carried out in the U.S. measured the cumulative effects of viewing violence over a period of time with the aim to provide evidence for causality, as well as producing correlations (Strasburger, 1995). Out of the six existing studies, five produced

TABLE 1. Main Studies Investigating Television and Film Violence

Author	Year	Type of Study	Summary of Authors' Findings
Bandura et al.	1963	Laboratory study	Children imitated violent behavior if model was rewarded
Berkowitz and Geen	1967	Laboratory study	More aggression shown to individuals that could be associated with a violent film
Halloran et al.	1970	Field survey	Difference in viewing behavior explained by general social class background
Lefkowitz et al.	1972	Longitudinal experimental study	Significant relationship between viewing television violence and aggressive behavior, 10 years later
Drabman and Thomas	1974	Laboratory study	Desensitisation of children to real-life aggression after exposure to violent film
Andison	1977	Meta-analysis	77% studies linked media violence to aggression
Belson	1978	Field survey	Association between serious harmful criminal acts and high exposure to television violence
Sebastian et al.	1978	Field experimental study	Young offenders who saw violent films were more aggressive than young offenders who saw nonviolent films
Zillman	1979	Laboratory study	Violent films do not produce aggression per se but generally heighten arousal in individuals
Singer and Singer	1981	Longitudinal experimental study	Heavier viewing of television predicted later aggressive behavior
Milavsky et al.	1982	Longitudinal experimental study	Viewing violence does not lead to aggressive behavior
Huesmann et al.	1984	Longitudinal experimental study	Link between exposure to television violence and criminal behavior 22 years later
Singer et al.	1984	Longitudinal experimental study	Importance on what children watched rather than just amount of television viewed
Huesmann and Eron	1986	Longitudinal experimental study	Viewing television violence predicts later aggressive behavior and is cumulative over time
Williams	1986	Naturalistic study	Aggression increased in children after the introduction of television to "Notel"
Josephson	1987	Field experimental study	Aggression increased in naturally aggressive individuals—evidence of cue acting as trigger for aggression
Centerwall	1989	Naturalistic study	Homicide rates increased after the introduction of television in South Africa
Bushman and Geen	1990	Laboratory study	Aggressive thoughts increased after exposure to screen violence—mediated by individual differences
Comstock	1991	Review of 1000 studies	A positive association between violent entertainment and aggressive behavior across cultures and social groups
Paik	1991	Meta-analysis	12 studies linked media violence to burglary and criminal violence
Bailey	1993	Clinical interview	Repeated exposure to violent videos was significant factor in young offenders' crimes
Vooijs and van der Voort	1993	Field experimental study	Television violence had a greater influence when exhibited by heroic characters (role models)
Hagell and Newburn	1994	Field survey	The viewing habits of young offenders and children were similar

unequivocal evidence that there is a strong connection between television violence and aggressive behavior (Huesmann & Eron, 1986; Huesmann, Eron, Lefkowitz, & Walder, 1984; Lefkowitz, Eron, Walder, & Huesmann, 1972; Singer, Singer, & Rapaczynskil, 1984; Singer & Singer, 1981), and one did not (Milavsky, Kessler, Stipp, & Rubens, 1982).

The investigations conducted by Huesmann and colleagues produced remarkable results when they studied a cohort of people at three different ages (8, 19, and 30 years). At age 30, they found a relationship between watching television violence at age 8 and aggressive or antisocial behavior 22 years later (Huesmann et al., 1984; Lefkowitz et al., 1972). Therefore, "If a child's observation of media violence promotes the learning of aggressive habits, it can have harmful lifelong consequences" (Huesmann, 1986, p. 129). However, the longitudinal study carried out by Milavsky et al. (1982) did not support the view that viewing violence leads to aggressive behavior, although critics of Milavsky's study have re-analyzed the data to show that it actually supports a causal explanation found by the other studies (Cook, Kendzierski, & Thomas, 1983).

In the UK, Belson (1978) studied 1,565 London male teenagers and found that those who watched a greater amount of violent television committed markedly more seriously harmful criminal acts. The less serious categories of criminal acts were also positively associated with greater exposure to violence on television. Two particular forms of antisocial or aggressive behavior were associated with this exposure to television violence: aggressiveness in sport and play, and swearing.

Further work carried out in Holland by Vooijs and van der Voort (1993) emphasized the importance of role models in television violence. Their studies indicated that while most children reject violent behavior committed by "baddies," and were less likely to be influenced by it, the "goodies" could do no wrong.

The most well known naturalistic studies compared places which had television to places which did not, to see if there were differences in levels of aggression between the two areas. Centerwall (1989) compared white homicide rates in South Africa with those in the U.S. and Canada by taking advantage of the fact that South Africa did not have television before 1975. Results indicated that "following the introduction of television, homicide rates doubled in Canada and the U.S. whereas in South Africa, where television did not as yet exist, white homicide rates remained the same over time" (Centerwall, 1989, p. 645). In 1983, data on white homicide rates in South Africa also showed that the annual rate was greater than in the years before the introduction of television (Centerwall, 1989). One factor needs to be taken in to account when looking at these results: The variable used was exposure to television in general rather than the more specific exposure to television violence. Therefore, it needs to be recognized that other factors about television viewing may be important in leading to violent behavior than television violence alone. In Centerwall's own words, "It is best to keep an open mind on the matter" (p. 651).

A study by Williams (1986) was similar to the above in that it compared three towns in Canada: "Notel" (no television), "Unitel" (one station), and "Multitel" (multiple stations). The towns were nearly identical apart from whether they had television or not. Data on children's physical and verbal aggression was obtained for the 2-year period before television was introduced and for the 2-year period after its introduction. It was concluded from the results that aggression increased in the children of "Notel" after the introduction of television and that they had caught up with their peers from "Unitel" and "Multitel" in the post-television 2-year period.

A full critical review of studies on the effects of violence on television is given by Cumberbatch (1995) in his report to the Council of Europe Steering Committee on the Mass Media. As always, he challenges whether the effects found are valid and really do exist, but his arguments are not convincing. Unfortunately, both the amount of studies

in this area and their debate go beyond the scope of this paper, as does a critical debate on the related area of the effects of pornography on sexual violence (see Linz & Malamuth, 1993; Weisz & Earls, 1995).

Theories and Concepts on the Effects of Violent Film

A number of concepts to explain the effects of violent film have emerged from social learning and cognitive theories. One such concept is disinhibition, where watching violence on the screen reduces inhibitions towards violence (Bushman & Geen, 1990). Violence becomes seen as a "normal" response to stress and frustration and acceptable to society, which in effect changes people's own moral code and attitudes towards the use of violence (Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, 1993).

Desensitization has been said to occur through repeated exposure to violent images as people become more acceptable of real-life violence and demand more extreme forms of violence on the screen (Gunter, 1990). The problem then becomes cyclical: the audience demands more explicit violence, the film-makers respond by making their films more graphic, which in turn desensitizes the audience and a vicious circle is established. The problem is that exposure to screen violence makes people less concerned about others, and also leads to them becoming more aroused so they are more likely to behave aggressively (Thomas, Horton, Lippencott, & Drabman, 1977).

Evidence for the process of desensitization has been provided by Drabman and Thomas (1974), who conducted a study with 8 year olds to determine which children would be more likely to seek help after witnessing a fight in the playroom. Children who viewed a violent film prior to watching the fight were less likely to tell an adult and act responsibly than children who had not seen the violent film. This implies they had become more tolerant of real-life violence due to their exposure to violent images on the screen. Some people have argued, however, that although it is easy to desensitize someone to a repeated scene, it does not necessarily mean that this will lead to a desensitization of new violent images (Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, 1993).

Perhaps the most prominent theory partly developed from the research on screen violence is social learning theory. Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1963), carried out a series of laboratory experiments to investigate under what circumstances children would imitate aggressive behavior. First, the children were mildly frustrated (by not being allowed to play with toys); then, they watched a film where an adult starts hitting and kicking a "Bobo doll" (plastic punching bag with a red nose). They were divided into three groups: those who saw the aggressor being rewarded, those who saw the aggressor being punished, and a neutral group who saw no consequences for the behavior. The model-rewarded group and the control group showed a considerable number of aggressive behaviors with the model-punished group only showing limited imitation. This showed that despite having acquired aggressive acts in their repertoire, they would only be acted out in favorable circumstances. It would, therefore, appear that we have a strong case of "observational learning" dependent on perceived efficacy. Similar results were shown by Bandura et al. (1963) in a further study; where socially reprehensible behavior was being modeled as long as it was successful.

Imitation was demonstrated in these and a subsequent experiment inviting the children to recall the aggressive acts, that all the experimental children could perform the aggressive acts they had witnessed if the circumstances were right. This is consistent with the social learning theory developed by Bandura (1973). In support of Bandura's work, Hicks (1965) found that children could reproduce the aggressive acts that they had been exposed to up to 8 months later.

Theories developed by Berkowitz (1984) and Huesmann (1986) were based on establishing what role the violent stimuli had on the cognitive processes which would lead the viewer to becoming aggressive.

Berkowitz's (1984) "cognitive neo-association" theory worked on the principle that cognitions and thoughts are interconnected by means of association. The connecting pathways are strengthened by "similarity and semantic relatedness." Therefore, he suggests that television and film violence might prime other aggressive ideas, feelings, and actions after viewing through "semantically strengthened associative pathways." This leads to the priming of aggression with viewers being more likely to have aggressive ideas and actions after watching film violence (Josephson, 1987).

Huesmann and Eron (1986) developed a "social cognitive" theory in which they describe violence on the screen being learned as a cognitive script to be used in social situations. The aggressive script is acquired as a way to behave, and whether people will use it depends on the amount of similarity between the situation at the time of retrieval and the situation at the time the script is encoded in memory.

Triggers are a concept included in both cognitive theories, together with the notion of "cue-triggered aggression." Huesmann and Eron (1986) suggest that aggressive behavior would be retrieved if a retrieval cue was present. However, Berkowitz (1984) claims ordinary situational stimuli could be paired with an aggressive scene and, in a subsequent situation, could be used to elicit aggression, especially if the person was already in an aggressive mood (i.e., was frustrated or angered). Evidence for these contentions was provided by Berkowitz and Geen (1967). They found that participants who were provided with the opportunity to be aggressive (in this case, give electric shocks) would act more strongly if the victim was linked to the aggressive film in some way. Other studies do not support these results and critics have suggested that violent films do not produce aggression per se but produce arousal instead (Tannenbaum & Zillman, 1975; Zillman, 1979). Indeed, Cumberbatch (1995) offers a detailed critical discussion of these concepts.

Nevertheless, other studies have supported Berkowitz's theory by investigating how individual differences in aggression interact with the violent stimuli in the elicitation of related aggressive thoughts and actions.

In Bushman and Geen's (1990) first experiment, they asked participants to recall their thoughts after viewing and rate the particular scene for violence levels. Results demonstrated that people exposed to violent television films were more likely to form aggressive cognitions than those who were not exposed. Aggressive thoughts increased with the level of violence in the scene. A second experiment showed that violent media evoked emotional responses which were related to aggression. However, individual differences moderated the responses to the violent stimuli. As Markus and Zajonc (1985) argue, the differences produced in these experiments are not simply random error and need deeper exploration.

Josephson (1987) looked at the characteristic level of aggression to examine whether the cueing-effect was more prominent in those with higher levels of trait aggression. Just as in Berkowitz's (1984) experiments, participants were frustrated either before or after the film. The participants were asked to play floor hockey after viewing the film, during which they were observed and aggressive behavior was noted. Results showed that the violent imagery did increase aggressive behavior, although only among the groups which had a moderately high average level of characteristic aggression. These highly aggressive groups also behaved more aggressively if they were exposed to violent images and cues. The cue was a walkie-talkie which was shown in the film and then during an interview prior to the hockey game; it was used on one group while the others were interviewed using a tape-recorder and microphone. In the "violence and cue" condition, the effect of having highly aggressive males in the group increased the aggression levels of the

characteristically low aggressive males. Results from Josephson's (1987) experiment can be explained using social cognitive theory. In terms of social scripting, males predisposed to being aggressive would be expected to have a large number of scripts which shared common features with the aggressive scene they had watched. However, for those who are less characteristically aggressive, they need the cue (the walkie-talkie) to link the floor hockey game with the aggressive script in the film. Therefore, individual differences may play an important role in the effects of screen violence, such as the predisposition to be aggressive.

Susceptibility to Violent Film

Dorr and Kovanic (1981) reviewed several studies that examined individual differences and concluded that screen violence can affect viewers of both sexes, different ages, social classes, and ethnicities. Research has shown that more aggressive youths are more likely to be influenced by exposure to screen violence (e.g., Hartman, 1969; Leyens, Camino, Parke, & Berkowitz, 1975; Stein & Friedrich, 1972). For example, Sebastian, Parke, Berkowitz, and West (1978) studied boys in a minimum-security prison. Boys who viewed aggressive films were more aggressive afterwards than the boys who saw a non-aggressive film.

Studies on the susceptibility to the effects of screen violence emerged after it was suggested in the U.S. Surgeon General's (Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee, 1972) report that the causal relationship between viewing violence and behaving aggressively was only true for those people predisposed to being aggressive. However, Kniveton and Stephenson (1973) found that intellectual deprivation was a mediating factor in that children who had little to interest them were more likely to imitate role models from the screen. McCarthy, Langner, Gersten, Eisenberg, and Orzeck (1975) suggested that the amount of television watched (which was positively related to aggression) was linked to earlier psychopathology and lowered intellectual functioning. It was also proposed that television violence damages early socialization as children learn to accept aggression as a normal behavior (Cline, 1976). Lefkowitz and Huesmann (1981) suggest that to fully understand and determine which people are susceptible to screen violence, it is necessary to take a cognitive approach such as how people understand what they watch and how they evaluate what they see in terms of their own moral understanding.

Recently, it has been argued that measurements such as skin responses or brain waves provide insight into when audiences get excited; however, they provide little qualitative data on why they get excited (Buckingham, 1996). It is, therefore, necessary to see the viewer as "actively" watching the screen. Reactions to what is being viewed are produced by the viewer ascribing some mental meaning to them, and judging the actions to accord or not with their own moral standards and experiences. The viewer's moral and other evaluative standards for personal conduct are key elements in the complex causal network on which reactions to screen imagery depend (Vine, 1994).

Consequently, there may be "vulnerable" individuals who are particularly susceptible to what they see on the screen (Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, 1993). Browne (1995) states that not everyone who watches violence on the screen will become violent. However, for the 3 to 10% of the population who are predisposed to being violent when frustrated, possibly as a result of growing up with violent parents, these films are unhealthy. In opposition, Vine (1994, p. 52) claims that research has not looked at what precisely causes such vulnerability and says that the people affected are "probably not confined to those who are already chronically aggressive, or from the lowest social classes."

Several factors are correlated with having a violent disposition, including having poor

parental role-models, inconsistent discipline, and being abused by a parent. All of these factors can lead to the development of a deviant personality and allow the child to have a low moral development (Browne & Herbert, 1997). The lack of moral norms means that the child interprets what they see on the screen in an distorted way by evaluating characters and scenes immaturely. However, Vine (1994) also points out that if individuals are susceptible to external triggers, such as violence on the screen, surely they will also be influenced by triggers away from the screen. "The real culprit is not what they see on the screen, but the deficiencies in how they have learned to interpret and evaluate media imagery" and, therefore, "protecting them from screen violence would again probably have only marginal effects on the overall incidence of their anti-social conduct" (Vine, 1994, p. 54).

MEDIA VIOLENCE, DELINQUENCY, AND CRIME

Research on media violence with young offenders has arisen as a result of the theory that they are a "vulnerable audience." Certain factors have been repeatedly linked to delinquency and crime, such as poverty, one-parent families, and a lack of parental care and affection, coupled with inconsistent discipline (Browne & Herbert, 1997). These background characteristics have also been associated in making people susceptible to screen images (Vine, 1994).

A 1960's UNESCO review stated that television viewing is a contributory factor to delinquency and crime, but it is likely to affect only those children who are already maladjusted and prone to commit crimes. "In any of these cases, television by itself cannot make a normal, well-adjusted child into a delinquent." Television was seen as dangerous from the point of view of an already aggressive child being able to gain hints of how to actually express their hostile feelings, rather than in terms of it being capable of making a non-aggressive child actually become aggressive (UNESCO, 1961, 1964).

Halloran, Brown, and Chaney (1970) conducted a study of individuals aged between 10 and 20 years to determine if there were any relationships between delinquency and the mass media. They took a sample of 334 probationers, 144 working class controls and 185 lower middle class controls. Controls were matched on age, sex, intelligence, and school attainment. Participants were interviewed to find out how important television was in their lives. The authors found that juvenile delinquents differed from controls in their viewing behavior. This difference was not due to the amount of television they watched or the actual programs viewed, but actually how they perceived and used the various programs. Delinquents were more interested in "exciting" programs, but were less able to say who they identified with on the screen.

The male probationers were mainly from working class families and often from a one parent family. They would be also more likely to show a lack of affection and greater emphasis on the "here-and-now." The most important finding was that there was very little difference between the probationers and the working class controls, whereas the middle class children were noticeably different. It was concluded that the viewing behavior must be explained by the general social class background rather than narrowing it down to the behavior of a specific group of people who break the law.

Recent studies on young offenders have concentrated on those predisposed to being aggressive. Bailey (1993) investigated 40 adolescent murderers and 200 young sex offenders and claimed that repeated exposure to violent and pornographic videos was a significant factor in these crimes including in some cases actual imitation of the screen image. Bailey (1993) proposes that these individuals are lacking internal boundaries, driven by distorted

ideas and have unstable and violent feelings as well as deviant role models from real or fictional sources. Again this supports the suggestion that there is some maladjustment or abnormality which underlies and influences young offenders' interpretations of screen images. This could again be linked to upbringing and family background to understand how this maladjustment materialized and stabilized. As some researchers have suggested, experiencing "real" violence in the home has a considerable effect on the predispositions to violence in the child (Browne, 1993; Jaffe, Wolfe, & Wilson, 1990), which in turn could be reinforced by the violence on the screen. The question is, do children/adolescents with violent tendencies seek out violent films and if so do these films reinforce the already present aggressive behavior and cause that behavior to be acted out?

We have, therefore, come across the "chicken-and-egg dilemma," which has been deliberated by several researchers. In longitudinal studies by Huesmann et al. (1984) and Huesmann and Eron (1986), they explored this issue and concluded that aggressive behavior at the age of 8 years did not predict violent television consumption 11 years later although the opposite idea of violent television predicting aggression was observed to be true.

A study completed by Hagell and Newburn (1994) revealed the viewing habits of young offenders and schoolchildren. Seventy eight offenders between the ages of 12 and 18 were compared with over 500 school children of a similar age. Despite the fact that the offenders had less access to television and video equipment, the two groups watched a similar amount of television. However, the offenders were no more likely to choose violent programs or films than the control group.

When asked to name their favorite films, both groups (for males) listed "Terminator 2" as their favorite. As for television programs, both liked soap operas and dramas, with the most popular program for offenders being a British police drama "The Bill" whereas the schoolboys and schoolgirls liked Australian soaps: "Home and Away" and "Neighbours," respectively. Thus, it was concluded that the "viewing habits of the two groups were obviously very similar" and "that research on what people are watching needs to be supplemented with further work on how they are watching" (Hagell & Newburn, 1994: PSI Press Release, April 11, p. 2).

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The above review descibes the main findings of the literature in this area (see Table 1), but it is also useful to assess the methodological approaches rather than accepting the published results per se. For this purpose, it is useful to divide the studies into groups based on the approaches used by the researchers.

Meta-analysis

This type of study has a major problem in that the results depend considerably on the studies being used as the data points. Obviously, if the methodology of the studies being collated is subject to question or vary, then this has a "knock-on" effect on the results of the overall meta-analysis.

Andison's (1997) meta-analysis highlights the problems involved, but also shows how these findings are as accurate as possible despite the inherent problems of this type of investigations. This analysis had a systematic approach with strict criteria for choosing the studies included. This meant the studies did not have to be weighted on methodological sophistication. The number of participants included overall (n = 30,000) meant that a

vast number of individuals and groups were represented in the results, so these could be generalized.

Generally in published studies, a bias exists towards those with significant results which would mean an over-representation of studies with positive results. However, Andison (1977) found that less than one in 20 of the studies actually said that viewing violence was beneficial for the viewer.

The fact that the studies were from a 20-year period could also mean that there is a time-series trend represented in the results. However, again, the author anticipates this problem and suggests that a difference in results could be due to the methods deployed by the various authors improving over time rather than being a time-series trend as initially suggested. Further analysis is needed to fully understand the complexities of the results.

Overall, this and the other meta analyses discussed appear to isolate the possible flaws associated with their designs and identify how these have been overcome to produce "fail-safe" results illustrating the negative effects of film violence.

Laboratory Studies

This method of studying human behavior has not been without criticism since its introduction. Whatever the area of study, people have argued that laboratory studies are artificial and unable to be generalized into real life situations. However, they have continued to be used because they allow a controllability of conditions, which is extremely hard to equal in the field setting.

Perhaps the most well-remembered laboratory studies in film violence is Bandura, Ross, and Ross' (1963) "Bobo doll" experiments. These studies utilized direct observation methods by trained "blind" observers to show imitation of aggressive behavior by children. However, the published results have come under attack from those who feel that such a "novel" display of aggression could not be used as conclusive evidence on the effects of violence in the media (Cumberbatch, 1995). It was felt that the children involved knew that they had a role to fulfill for the researchers and behaved accordingly.

The other disparity between this laboratory study and real life is that in the study, children were given a chance to imitate the aggression immediately after viewing the role model, thus creating a very strong contingency between what they have just seen and being able to imitate the behavior, whereas children will usually go and play normally or do some other activity after watching television.

Following from this, another criticism of the realism of laboratory studies is that the measure of aggression used is very distinct from real life expressions of aggression. The main problem is that laboratory aggression is isolated from social contexts in which aggression arises and needs to be understood (Archer, 1989). One of the most common forms of laboratory aggression is the "supposed" giving of electric shocks, like in the studies of Berkowitz and Geen (1967). This is an extreme form of aggression relatively removed from that displayed in everyday life; yet, this seems to be accepted as evidence that following a violent film, people will act more aggressively.

How can such an artificial display be generalized at all? One way to circumvent this argument is to say that the actual measure of aggression is irrelevant as long as the intention to hurt someone is exhibited by the participant (Berkowitz & Donnerstein, 1982). If this is the case, then it could be suggested that aggressive acts in the laboratory involve the same emotions as those outside the laboratory; therefore, these studies provide good evidence which can be classed as ecologically valid. To fully achieve this, studies such as Bandura's "Bobo Doll" experiments and those of Berkowitz and Geen, need to be supplemented with questions as to the meaning participants' gave to their aggressive

acts. For all the authors know, children hitting the "Bobo dolls" (recorded as being aggressive and published as such) could well have been playing without being malicious. Without the underlying subjectivity of meaning, these objective observations give very little information as to the aggressive intent of the child involved.

The participants' interpretations of what is expected of them and how they define the task can affect the generalization of results more than the experimental design (Bass & Firestone, 1980, cited in Berkowitz & Donnerstein, 1982). This could be problematic for studies like Bushman and Geen's (1990), where they used psychology undergraduates as participants. These subjects may be more aware of the demands from the researchers and although, they were told that it was to do with media evaluation, they may still be trying to work out what is expected of them, which could influence the results gained. Having said this, Berkowitz and Donnerstein (1982) found that even if you manipulated what the participants understood about the study, this did not have an impact on their responses.

Laboratory studies give focused answers to some of the questions in the screen violence debate. However, although they can be utilized to demonstrate short-term effects, they are not as useful in discovering the long-term effects of frequent exposure (Berkowitz, 1989). This is where the research turns to the longitudinal approach, but again as in the above, the designs of even some of the most famous longitudinal research are open to question and scrutiny.

Longitudinal Studies

This type of study provides a very good source of investigating the cumulative effects of watching violent film and television. Some of the problems from this type of research come from the measures used, which is mainly reports of aggressive behavior and amount of television violence viewed. These reports are either self-reports or reports made by peers, parents or teachers. Lefkowitz et al. (1972) used parental reports of their child's early television violence viewing which is not likely to provide an accurate picture as parents may believe that aggressive children prefer the more aggressive programs.

Singer and Singer (1981) were able to produce more valid results in their study as they used the observations of both mothers and trained observers. This meant they had two different types of observations to compare rather than basing their results on just one group's recordings of behavior. From these findings they concluded that it was what the children were watching that made the difference rather than simply the amount of television in general being viewed.

Huesmann and Eron's (1986) cross-national study had a sound design in that it took two accounts of participants' aggression (self and peer) similar to Singer and Singer's (1981) study, yet, it only relied on self-reports for television viewing, again bringing in a element for bias. Although, the authors tried to generalize their findings, there were differences between the different countries which did not fully come across in their findings. Cumberbatch (1995) suggested that the analysis carried out was not comprehensive enough without introducing third variables such as identification with characters, which was demonstrated in the Finnish study.

Milavsky et al. (1982) used self, parental, and teacher's reports to enable the results to be placed into the home and classroom contexts. A problem which did occur in this study was that the attrition rate was high, which changed the composition of the sample from beginning to end. An important aspect to this study was that the authors controlled for the fact that children may not produce valid results in terms of the television programs they said they watched. They gave fictional titles to the participants and took out the children who claimed to have seen these non-existent films. They found that the correlation

they had recorded originally, decreased when the invalid responses were taken out (Cumberbatch, 1995). There is still debate among researchers about what the results of this study actually show.

Another problem with longitudinal research is that the results will vary depending on whether the study is completed retrospectively or prospectively. This can be seen in Lefkowitz et al.'s (1972) prospective study where the fact that a child is labeled aggressive may affect later recordings of violent television viewed. A retrospective approach also has important limitations.

Studies on Screen Violence and Delinquency

Belson (1978) used a retrospective design asking teenage males to recall television programs seen in their younger years. Here, there is the problem of recall bias where the participants may recall programs not representative of their overall viewing, or may simply forget the kinds of programs they used to watch. There is also the problem that Milavsky et al. (1982) encountered about the validity of recalling. Belson tried to claim that the responses were reliable, but just because they were consistently reported does not mean that valid responses were being given.

Belson collected data from a large sample (n = 1,565): however, reports of aggression could have been biased as they were self-reported and relied on honesty from these male teenagers. Participants would have to be owning up to sensitive information such as "cutting people with razors or glass." This may be something they would not freely admit to, depending on what they felt were the consequences of their admission. Unfortunately, despite assurances of confidentiality, honesty may not always be shown.

Bailey's (1993) study on offenders has been criticized on similar grounds as it relied on self-reports through clinical interviews of young offenders and there was no control group for comparison. Finally, the work completed by Hagell and Newburn (1994) failed to take into account social class as a confounding factor, which would appear to be somewhat misleading considering the influence of this variable in the work of Halloran et al. (1970).

What the above has shown is that the research completed in this area is by no means flawless as is often the case when doing research on human participants. However, the contributions of the work in this field so far cannot be denied in terms of demonstrating that film and television violence has an effect on those who watch it, more often than not.

CONCLUSION

The work of Hagell and Newburn (1994) supports the contentions by Vine (1994) and Buckingham (1996) that there is a need to evaluate the role of mental representations and moral evaluation which may influence viewing behavior and its effects. Individual differences are perhaps, a reflection of not what is watched but rather what is remembered. It is important to determine what importance each scene has to an individual and the meaning they ascribe to it. Only then can we begin to understand how violent film and television influences violent behavior and who is most susceptible to such an influence.

The defense offerred by film-makers that cutting violence from their films is destroying their art, fails to take account of the fact that many young people who watch films on video view the violent scenes devoid of the overall story. Rather than look at the whole film in real time, as one would do in the cinema, violent scenes may be played over repeatedly, freeze-framed, and nonviolent scenes fast-forwarded to the next violent epi-

sode. Thus, violent imagery may often be seen out of context and the consequences of such violence not observed. Further research can build on existing knowledge and begin to explore the effects of violent film observed "inappropriately."

Perhaps an agenda for future research is to use a multimethod approach combining direct observation, indirect reports, and self-reports on the way people watch film, how they watch it, and what they understand and conclude from it. This would provide information on context, method, and interpretation of viewing violent film and television, respectively. A longitudinal perspective to this multimethod approach would ascertain changes in context, method, and interpretation with age and development. As direct observation can confirm the findings of indirect reports and self-reports, such studies would be less open to criticism and debate.

The availability of video film in the home environment has brought new dimensions to research on the effects of violence in the media. How different groups of individuals view video film and use it in the home environment may have important consequences for the way they perceive and understand the images presented and what they remember or imitate at a later time. The advent of interactive video and the concerns expressed about computer games, suggest that there is an urgent need to research and gain further knowledge of the effects of viewing violence, both real and artificial, in the home environment.

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CHAPTER 2: INVESTIGATION METHODS AND PROCEDURES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to measure the behavioural and psychological impact of violent films on young offenders and non-offenders. This chapter is a description of the methods and procedures utilised to realise these aims, representing the sequential order from pilot study to treatment of data, in which the study was designed. Therefore, it describes the grouping together of the participants on an offending or non-offending basis for comparison, how they were interviewed before and after viewing a violent film and how they were then followed up at an extended time period after this initial viewing. During the actual film viewing, the participants were directly observed by the researcher. Full explanatory details are given of all the questionnaires and the psychological assessments used throughout the interview procedures.

2.2 PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

The participants taking part in the study were placed in the following subgroups:

- 27 violent young male offenders aged between 15 and 17 years.
- 15 non-violent young male offenders aged between 15 and 17 years.
- 20 non-offender, male school students aged between 15 and 17 years
- 27 violent young male offenders aged between 18 and 21 years.

- 13 non-violent young male offenders aged between 18 and 21 years.

- 20 non-offender, male college students aged between 18 and 21 years

2.2.1 Offender Sample

Eighty two male young offenders who were under the jurisdiction of either the Home Office (currently serving a custodial sentence in a Young Offenders Institution (HMYOI)) or the Department of Health (currently in a residential centre) participated in the study. From this original sample pool, they were divided into four groups based on age and offence type (see above bullet points).

The offenders were placed in either the non-violent or violent groups after the databases at both the secure institutions and the Home Office Offenders Index were studied to obtain current and previous offence details. Non-violent offenders were those who had no current violent offences and had no previous history of violent offending. Violent offenders (including sexually violent offenders) were those who had either a current violent offence or had preconvictions for violent assaults. Non-violent offences committed by people in the study were: car thefts; theft from vehicles and shops; burglary (both residential and business); receiving or handling stolen goods; drug dealing or possession; fraud; criminal damage; arson (not endangering life); driving offences; perverting the course of justice and absconding. Violent offences committed by the participants included ABH, s.18 or s. 20 wounding (GBH), assaulting a police officer, robbery, manslaughter, rape and murder. The most serious offences were committed by a very small number of people in the sample; less than one per cent of the young offenders had committed a murder, nearly two per cent had committed a manslaughter and less than one per cent had committed a rape.

The unequal group sizes was due to the original sample (which consisted of even numbers of violent and non-violent offenders) being reorganised after the young persons' previous offences

were checked on the Offenders Index. It was found that some people who had been classified originally as non-violent from the secure institutions' databases, had previous convictions for violent offences recorded on the Offenders Index. They were therefore regrouped accordingly.

2.2.2 Non-Offender Sample

Twenty male school students aged between 15 and 17 years and 20 college students aged between 18 and 21 years acted as comparison groups. Only males were asked to participate in the study as the films being shown involved plots with male role models and identification with characters could have differed with gender. Females could have interpreted them differently which would have confounded comparisons between offender and non-offender groups with gender differences. (It would however, be interesting to run a further study utilising the same research design but comparing these results with those from female young offenders and female school students).

An attempt was made to match the groups as far as possible on social and intellectual background (for example, the use of technical college students rather than university students), but perfect matching proved to be difficult given the nature of these factors being associated with offending behaviour. Where significant differences in matched characteristics persisted they were controlled for in the statistical analyses.

2.3 PROCEDURES

All the participants were asked to fill in consent forms as participation was strictly on a voluntary basis. There were no difficulties in getting people to volunteer; this was more evident in the secure institutions where offenders wanted a break from routine.

Offenders were randomly selected from within the violent and non-violent categories and came

from different wings within the secure institutions. The school/college sample were again randomly selected from a number of different courses and years. The refusal rate was very low (2%) and therefore it was felt that the sample was relatively unbiased within the institutions used. However, it must be remembered that only two secure institutions and only three educational establishments took part and therefore these may not have been representative of the wider prison or school/college populations.

All participants were given a full explanation of what the study would involve and reminded that they could withdraw at any time. However, the purpose of the study was not revealed. A copy of the consent form (see Appendix I) shows that participants were told that the study was about young people's experiences of watching videos and that they would be asked about their opinion of a film after viewing it. Some of the participants did ask if it was specifically about film violence. They were told that the videos they would watch would contain violent scenes, but that it was their reactions to the film and their opinion of it in general that was of interest to the research.

They were also informed that any information given, except that which may put their life or the life of another at risk, was anonymous and totally confidential. In addition to consent from the participants, letters were sent to parents and social workers or probation workers. These asked either for permission or if they had any objections to the individual taking part in the study, dependent on the age of the individual involved (16 or under and over 16 years respectively).

2.3.1 The Pilot Study

The complex design of the study meant that it needed to be planned fully before it was implemented in any of the proposed institutions. One of the most important logistical considerations to be piloted was the timing of the sessions to ascertain whether the necessary interviews and viewing could be fitted into the tight time schedule given by the young offender institutions. A pilot study was therefore carried out at the residential centre to test the following

procedures:

Participants were to be interviewed separately about their viewing habits. They were then shown a violent video film, during which their reactions would be observed with the aid of a portable micro-computer and interviewed separately immediately after viewing the film about their recollections and interpretations of it. On a separate occasion, the participants were to be interviewed to assess their family background, their predispositions towards anger, their empathetic concern and their moral maturity.

A violent video film ("Little Odessa" (Cert 15)), which was not used in the actual study, was used for the purposes of the pilot. Those who took part in the pilot study (two offenders and two non-offenders) did not take part in the actual study, as they would have been familiar with the design of the research and the questions being asked. This could have influenced what they said when asked the questions at a later date. The following four practical problems were identified by the pilot study.

1) The interviews prior to and after the film-viewing had to be limited to 45 minutes each as the majority of films have an average running time of 90 minutes and the young offenders were only available for a maximum period of 3 hours at any one time.

   To overcome the problem, only two individuals were interviewed at one time. With just two to observe during the film, it was possible to complete all interviews in the 45 minutes allocated before and after viewing and reach an acceptable level of intra-rater reliability (85% and above) when directly observing the participants' viewing behaviour.

2) Regarding the separate second interview session, the young offenders would only be available for an hour to complete the non-repeat measures which were essential for matching across groups for comparison. Therefore, the proposed non-repeat measures

were changed to compromise with the time constraints but without sacrificing essential information. The Wechsler Intelligence Scale was omitted due to its length and replaced by the shorter Schonell Reading Test (Schonell and Goodacre, 1974) and the Children's Category Test (Boll, 1993). Both correlate highly with IQ.

3) The original proposal of using one video film per age group proved to be unsatisfactory as those individuals watching the film first, would discuss the film and its contents with other participants on their units/wings. This might influence the latter's viewing reactions. Such contamination of the primacy effect is unavoidable in secure institutions.

   Hence, three films were chosen for each age group in order to limit the amount of possible influence from discussion on the units/wings. The films were randomly assigned each week so that prospective viewers were unaware of the film they were about to view. However, during the initial questionnaire, all participants were asked whether they had seen a number of films, including the three in the study, to ensure the primacy effect.

4) An interviewer effect was found with responses given to the female interviewer differing from those given to the male interviewer.

To solve the last confounding problem, another female interviewer was recruited to carry out interviews to eliminate the interviewer bias found in the pilot study.

2.3.2 The Video Films

The films were chosen in conjunction with the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) who recommended several films they felt would be appropriate to the project. After viewing a number of different films and taking into consideration the notes of the BBFC's examiners; three films were chosen for each of the two age groups. Films were required to contain scenes of action and violence but no explicit sex, nudity or substantial female roles. This proved hard to find at the

Cert. 18 film level and the three films for this age group did contain some sexual imagery. The films had to have been released into commercial video shops over the previous month (ie. new on the market), without substantial advertising campaigns and could not be sequels in a series. All films must have been released straight on to video without cinema distribution and prior to any cable, satellite or terrestrial television showing. One final constraint on the choice was that they could not contain "movie stars" such as Sylvester Stallone or Jean Claude Van Damme. These actors have appeared in numerous films which may lead to the individual associating them with some other role and remembering this rather than the present character they portrayed. Nevertheless, some of the actors were familiar to the participants. With all these restrictions the following films were chosen:

For the 15-17 year old age group:

Surviving the Game (Cert 15) - An American "action" film. Main character played by Ice-T (American Actor and Rap Star).

Synopsis of Film- *A homeless man (Mason) is offered a job as a hunt guide. On arriving he finds out he is the one to be hunted. The film revolves around this man-hunt with Mason having to use various methods to escape from the hunters who are shooting at him throughout. He manages to survive by killing the people involved although the leader of the hunt (Burns) escapes back to the city. However, Mason catches up with him and the film ends with a violent finale between him and Burns who ends up being killed.*

Project Shadowchaser- The Edge of Darkness (Cert 15) - An American "sci-fi" horror film. No well-known actors.

Synopsis of Film- *The crew of a spaceship find themselves under attack from another ship. When they go on to the other ship to investigate they are chased by a malfunctioning android.*
The rest of the film sees them being terrorised by this android who can transform himself to look

like the members of the crew. The android kills most of the crew as they try to escape. However, at the end of the film, two people (Cody and Rea) manage to survive by killing the android and escaping in an escape pod.

No Surrender (Cert 15) - An American "karate" film. Main character played by Corey Feldman (American Actor).

Synopsis of Film *- A young boy (Greg) gets involved with a gang who commit burglaries. During a burglary, he ends up dead after a fight with the gang members. The gang make it look like he has committed suicide. His younger brother (Ethan) wants to find out what happened so joins the gang who compete for a rival karate team. The film culminates in a tournament between the two rival karate clubs which turns into a fight "to the death" between the gang leader (Taylor) and Ethan. He is stopped from killing Taylor by the ghost of Greg. Taylor is arrested.*

All three Certificate 15 films contained violent and horror images and had a Cert. 15 level of violence. All three ended happily with good outwitting evil and winning.

For the 18-21 year old age group:

I.D. (Cert 18) - A British "action" film about football violence . Main character played by Reece Dinsdale (English television actor).

Synopsis of Film *- Four policemen go under-cover to investigate football hooliganism. One of the policemen (John) becomes too involved in the life of their "targets" and starts to enjoy the violent lifestyle. The investigation is terminated and the police are sent back to normal duty. John finds he cannot go back to his old life again and loses his job, girlfriend and destroys his home. The final scene is of him in a National Front march where he pretends to his friend (Trevor) that he is under-cover again and carries on with the march.*

Last Gasp (Cert 18) - An American "horror" film. Main character played by Robert Patrick (American Actor).

Synopsis of Film *- A business man (Chase) builds a hotel on sacred tribal land in South America. He kills the tribe's Chieftain and Chase becomes possessed with the tribal spirit which leads to him killing people using a particular method of slashing the victim's Achilles tendon to prevent them from escape. One of the people he kills is the other main character's (Nora) husband. She discovers the tribal link and sets out to kill Chase and protect her friend. The final fight scene is between Nora and Chase whereupon Chase dies and Nora becomes possessed with the spirit. The film ends with Nora preparing to kill her friend dressed as the Indian tribal warrior.*

Love and A 45 (Cert 18) - An American violent "road movie". The film presents a similar theme to the notorious "Natural Born Killers". No well known actors.

Synopsis of Film *- Two men (Watty and Billy) rob a store together. Billy has not followed Watty's advice and uses a loaded gun. During the robbery, he shoots someone. Watty and his girlfriend (Star) go on the run after killing two policemen who threaten them. They are chased by Billy and two other gangsters (who are after money and who are all on drugs) and by the police. They are also shown as being television 'celebrities'. Billy finds Star and Watty and the three of them escape into Mexico. There is a big fight between them and Star ends up killing Billy by injecting him with a drug overdose. The final scene is of Star and Watty driving off after taking a drug together.*

All films contained a Cert. 18 level of violence and involved some non-violent sex scenes. All three ended without good outwitting evil, leaving it up to the viewer to determine how it would eventually end.

2.3.3 Procedures for the Actual Study (see Table 2.1)

Sessions lasting three hours (adapted to the routine of the establishment) were scheduled, with two participants taking part in each session on a particular afternoon or morning. The participants were interviewed individually in two separate rooms so that no views on the video film could be shared, except during viewing. Any such reactions during the showing were noted at the time. These comprehensive sessions were divided into three sections; **First Interview Schedule, Viewing of the Film and Second Interview Schedule**. In addition, an **Initial Psychological Assessment** was carried out, together with two **Follow-Up Interviews.** These took place independent of this three hour session, as detailed below.

Table 2.1: Summary of Procedures and Questionnaires for Actual Study*

	Part of Procedure	**Questionnaires or Assessments Used**
1)	Initial Psychological Assessment Interview	*The Children's Category Test* *The Schonnel Reading Test* *The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder* *The Conflict Tactics Scale* *The Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale*
2)	First Interview Schedule	*Viewing Habits Interview* *Interpersonal Reactivity Index* *Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Scale*
3)	Viewing the Film	*Direct Observation of Participants*
4)	Second Interview Schedule	*Interpersonal Reactivity Index* *Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Scale* *Initial Film Interview* *The Social Reflection Questionnaire*
5)	Follow -up	*General Information Interview* *Follow- Up Film Interview* *Delinquency Questionnaire* *The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder*

***See Appendices II, III, VI and VII for Complete Questionnaires and Psychological Assessment Measures given in the Chronological Order of Administration.**

2.3.3.1 Part One - Initial Psychological Assessment Interview

After agreeing to take part in the study, each participant received an initial 45 minute interview on a separate occasion to the main film viewing and film interviews, to collect psychometric information related to their social and intellectual backgrounds.

Two measures of intellectual achievement were used: the Children's Category Test and the Schonnel Reading Test. Both tests were chosen because they are highly correlated with standard IQ tests yet are quick and simple to administer.

The Children's Category Test (Boll, 1993) measures non-verbal learning and memory, concept formation and problem-solving abilities. It consists of a series of visual patterns which represent either the numbers 1, 2, 3 or 4. Participants have to state which number the pattern represents and they are scored on the errors they make.

The Schonnel Reading Test (see Schonnel and Goodacre, 1974) measures the current reading age. It consists of blocks of words which increase with difficulty as they are located further down the page. The participant simply reads the words out loud until they are consistently making errors at which stage their position on the page is noted and scored.

Three measures of social and emotional background were administered; the Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder, the Conflict Tactics Scale and the Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale.

The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder - School Form (Naglieri, LeBuffe & Pfeiffer, 1993) is a 40 item scale which identifies behavioural and emotional problems in adolescents. Severe mental disorders or illnesses have been associated with aggressive behaviour (Kandler Englander, 1997) and therefore it was necessary to consider and control for mental disorder in the subsequent analyses. People who were identified as having emotional and behavioural problems were excluded from the sample.

The school form of the test was used as this only took five minutes to complete. Respondents have to tick the answer, based on a 5 point scale, which most accurately describes the frequency (never, rarely, occasionally, frequently, very frequently) with which they display certain behaviours such as "disregarding the feelings of others" or "refusing to speak". Items on the score form are organised into four sub-scales:

- **Interpersonal Problems**; unable to maintain satisfactory relationships with peer and teachers.
- **Inappropriate Behaviours/Feelings**; exhibited under normal circumstances.
- **Depression**; exhibits a general pervasive mood of unhappiness.
- **Physical Symptoms and Fears**; associated with personal or school problems.

The Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1979) determines whether the participants had been subjected to some form of family violence. The individual indicates whether he (the respondent) was hit or beaten up by their parents or vice-versa without mentioning the word abuse.

The scale identifies how conflicts or arguments were resolved in the home, firstly with one scale for their mother (or significant maternal figure) and one for their father (or significant paternal figure). The beginning of the scale starts with "discussed the issue calmly" and continues over 20 responses to "being threatened or actually hurt with a knife or another weapon". For each descriptive item, the respondent has to identify the frequency with which this conflict tactic was utilised by the respective parent (or significant parental figure) and by themselves by scoring a response on a 5 point scale from 0 ("never") to 4 ("always"). Responses to the Scale are concatenated into six main categories;

- **Reasoning Acts** (eg: got information to back up her/his side).
- **Emotionally Hostile Acts** (eg: sulked or stomped out of room).
- **Cried** (during an argument).
- **Threatening Acts** (eg: threatened to hit or throw something).

- **Violent Acts** (eg: slapped, pushed, grabbed or shoved the other).
- **Severely Violent Acts** (eg: kicked, bit or hit with fist, beat up).

In addition to the original scale, the participants were asked about their parents' arguments - whether they were calmly solved or whether they had witnessed violence between their parents. The perpetrator of the violence and the level of violence used was also noted if volunteered by the participant.

The Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale (NAS - Novaco, 1975) consists of two parts; in Part A, respondents have to answer as to the extent certain statements about what people think and feel are true for them on a 3 point scale; never true (1), sometimes true (2) or always true (3). In part B, the answer requires the participant to say how much anger, based on a 4 point scale (not at all (1), a little (2), fairly (3) or very angry (4)), they would feel in certain situations which could make people feel angry.

Responses to **Part A** of the Scale are concatenated into four categories within each of the three domains (Cognitive, Arousal and Behavioural) and **Part B** into five categories in one domain (Angry Situational), as follows:

- **Cognitive Domain (Part A)**; attentional focus, rumination, hostile attitude and suspicion.
- **Arousal Domain (Part A)**; intensity, duration, tension and irritability.
- **Behavioural Domain (Part A)**; impulsive reaction, verbal aggression, physical confrontation and indirect expression.
- **Angry Situational Domain (Part B)**; disrespectful treatment, unfairness/injustice, frustration/interruption, annoying traits and irritations.

This scale was utilised for the study due to existing research identifying that aggressive individuals are more likely to perceive certain situations (especially ambiguous situations) as threatening (Dodge, Bates and Pettit, 1990). It was therefore useful to determine which

individuals identified particular situations as liable to make them angry and to compare these perceptions across the groups.

2.3.3.2 Part Two - First Interview Schedule

Participants were asked about their viewing habits including: how many hours of television, video and satellite films they watched per week; what kinds of films they liked to watch and why; who they would like to be in a film and why; what films they had already seen and whether they thought films should be given certificates. This interview was used to compare the viewing habits of all the groups in order to see whether violent offenders differed in what they liked to watch and how much they watched in relation to the comparison groups of non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

In addition to this interview, participants were given the ***Interpersonal Reactivity Index*** (Davis, 1980; 1983) which is a 28 item scale measuring four components of empathy:

- **Perspective Taking** (measuring the ability to appreciate other's points of view- eg. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision).

- **Empathetic Concern** (measuring the ability to feel concern for others' misfortunes- eg. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me).

- **Fantasy** (measuring the ability to identify with fictitious characters- eg. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a book).

- **Personal Distress** (measuring the extent of sharing negative emotions with others- eg. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease).

Participants' responses are scored on a 5 point scale related to how much the particular item describes them; Does not describe me at all (0), Does not describe me well (1), Not Sure (2), Describes me well (4) or Describes me totally (5). Scores are then added up within their respective categories above, to give a total for each of the four categories and a total for the questionnaire as a whole.

The empathetic capabilities of the participants were important to determine as studies have shown that offenders are less likely to express empathetic concern for others than non-offenders (Kaplan and Arbuthnot, 1985). The Interpersonal Reactivity Index was chosen because it allowed comparisons on a number of different aspects of Empathy including the ability to identify with fictitious characters ('Fantasy') which was particularly relevant to the discussion of violent film effects.

The final stage to the initial interview was the ***Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Scale*** (Spielberger, 1983; 1991). The former assesses the individual's experience of anger both as an emotional state or condition (State Anger) or as their predisposition to find certain situations annoying or frustrating (Trait Anger). The latter assesses the expression of anger including subscales of Anger In and Anger Out. The scale is divided into three parts:

- How I Feel Right Now (State Anger)
- How I Generally Feel (Trait Anger)
- When Angry Or Furious.....(The Expression of Anger)

In order to further clarify the various components of the State-Trait and Anger Expression Scales, the following is an explanation of the terms used:

- **State Anger-** the intensity of anger felt at a given time (eg. I am furious).

- **Trait Anger-** an individual's disposition to experience anger (eg. I am quick tempered). This includes the following two subscales:

  i) **Angry Temperament-** the propensity to experience anger without provocation.

  ii) **Angry Reaction-** the propensity to experience anger when criticised

- **Anger- In-** how often angry feelings are kept inside or suppressed (eg. I withdraw from people).

- **Anger- Out-** how often anger is expressed outwards to other people or objects (eg. I strike out at whatever infuriates me).

- **Anger Control-** how often an individual attempts to control rather than express anger (eg. I can stop myself from losing my temper).

- **Anger Expression-** determines the general frequency of anger expression, regardless of the direction in which it is expressed.

Responses are scored on different scales dependent on the section of the questionnaire. State Anger is based on a 4 point scale from Not at all (1) to Very Much so (4), while Trait Anger and the Anger Expression Scale are based on a 4 point scale which goes from Almost Never (1) to Almost Always (4). Participants' scores on these scales are added up to receive totals for the various sections; State Anger, Trait Anger (including Reaction and Temperament) and Anger Expression (Anger In + Anger Out - Anger Control +16).

This particular scale was used because it was possible to assess aggressive temperaments (Trait Anger), which is important when determining if people are predisposed to being aggressive, while at the same time measuring current anger levels (State Anger). Both this questionnaire and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index were used as repeat measures before and after viewing of the video to determine if differences in scoring occurred as a result of the viewing: for example, was there

an elevation in State Anger immediately after viewing the violent video?

2.3.3.3 Part Three - Viewing of the Film:

This part of the session lasted one and a half hours and involved two participants watching a video film appropriate to their age (Cert. 15 and Cert. 18) with violent scenes. During the viewing, the participants were observed with the aid of a portable computer. All movements, behaviours and vocalisations were recorded on to the computer with their time of entry coinciding with the running time of the video film. This enabled an in-depth scene by scene analysis of reactions to the film to be undertaken. Due to the complexity of the methodological design for this section, a full discussion of the direct observation methods is given in Chapter 5: The Behavioural Impact of Viewing Violent Film.

2.3.3.4 Part Four - Second Interview Schedule

The participants were given the **two** repeat psychological measures, ***Interpersonal Reactivity Index*** and ***Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Scale*** in reverse order so that State Anger was assessed immediately prior to and after viewing.

They were then given a questionnaire regarding their thoughts on the film they had just viewed. These questions were designed to determine: what they thought of the film overall; what parts they remembered from the film and whether they could remember the sequence of events in the film; who they identified with in the film; what parts they particularly liked or disliked about the film; what parts made them feel sad/angry/calm or excited and why exactly they felt like that; what they thought the film lacked and what age group they thought the film was appropriate for.

The final section to this last interview assessed their level of moral maturity, as this is an important component in how people evaluate what they see on the screen (Lefkowitz and

Huesmann, 1981). The ***Social Reflection Questionnaire*** (Gibbs, Basinger and Fuller, 1992) was used to measure this because it has been shown to be highly reliable and valid in relation to existing moral development measurements and is quick to administer (Gibbs, Basinger and Fuller, 1992). This ease of administration was important because of the time constraints placed by the institutional regime and because it makes it easy to understand by people who have limited attentional and intelligence capabilities as evident in some young offenders (Gavaghan, Arnold and Gibbs, 1983).

The questionnaire consists of 12 questions which require the participant to say how important (very important, important or not important), particular things that people do are (such as keeping a promise) and why they think these things are important. The answers given to the questions are scored according to the moral developmental level they represent and based on this, participants are given a modal and global moral stage score.

2.3.3.5 Part Five - Follow Up

Two follow-up interviews were carried out: one between three and four months and another between nine and ten months after the initial viewing. These follow-up interview took place even if they had left the establishment in which they had previously been interviewed in. In the case of the offenders, social workers or probation officers were contacted prior to the interview to ascertain the home circumstances of the offenders and where they could be contacted. Advice from the social workers was sought as to where the most suitable place to meet, which was convenient but not unsafe.

The interviews consisted of 4 parts:

1) A general information questionnaire which asked: where the person was now living and who they were living with; whether they were currently employed; were they currently serving a different sentence from the previous one. In addition, personal problems experienced by them or members of their family were investigated.

2) A questionnaire about the film they were originally shown, which, among other questions, asked: what and who they could remember from the film, whether they remembered what they liked or disliked about the film. At the three to four month interview, no specific prompts about the film were given. However, at the later nine to ten month interview, specific prompts relating to film content were offered such as "what was the consequence of the 'hero's' specific action".

3) A delinquency questionnaire asked whether they had committed any delinquent or criminal acts since the last interview and how frequently they had committed these. This was asked of all participants in the study (offenders and non-offenders) and all were assured of the confidentiality of their answers (unless it was information which may put their life or the life of another at risk). Despite this assurance of anonymity, there was the risk that participants might not answer completely honestly, as they might not want any repercussions from what they disclosed to the researcher. The reliability of self-report questionnaires is always open to question as they are extremely hard to validate. Official records could be used to see if self-reported crimes "match up" with crimes recorded in the same time period. However, this works on the assumption that individuals are always caught for the crimes they commit and this, in reality, is often not the case. This has to be remembered in the discussion of the results for this questionnaire.

4) The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder

2.4 TREATMENT OF DATA

Account was taken in the data analysis of any age effects. The results are discussed for both age groups combined, unless a significant age difference was found.

In comparing violent offenders, non violent offenders and non offenders (school/college students), ANOVA and T-Tests were used for interval data and the Chi-square Test for categorical data. All tests for significance were carried out at a two-tail level. If no significant differences were found from an analysis of variance (ANOVA) across the three groups, then the two offender groups were merged together so that a comparison of offenders against non-offenders, irrespective of offence type, could be undertaken. This was done either for the combined age group or for the separate age groups.

2.5 MULTI-VARIATE ANALYSES

With such a large data set and a number of intercorrelating factors (or variables), it was decided to use a discriminant function analysis to determine which factors were important for distinguishing offenders from non-offenders and to identify a method of classifying a sample in relation to an individual's potential for offending behaviour.

The discriminant function analysis was applied in two methods: Firstly, the "direct entry method" or "full method" was used where all factors are considered together and their order of importance is determined taking any cross-correlations into account. Secondly, the "stepwise method" was used which identifies, in isolation, the most important factors for distinguishing between the two groups. This provides a validity check for the order of relative importance determined by the first method.

The relative order of importance is obtained on the basis of how much a particular factor, in

comparison to other factors, can explain the observed differences between the two groups. This is based on the size of the correlation shown by the standardised canonical discriminant function coefficients.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has described the sampling of the participants and the methods utilised for the various aspects of this current study. The order of these procedures is consistent with the arrangement of chapters throughout this thesis. Within each subsequent chapter a brief outline is given of the relevant methods for that particular section. The following chapter describes the characteristics of the participants, which were mainly based on the Initial Assessment Interview.

CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERISTICS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS OF YOUNG OFFENDERS AND NON-OFFENDERS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the study of individuals who commit violence, it has been recognised that it is not possible to locate just one source of this aggressive behaviour or to isolate one factor that leads to the development of an aggressive personality (Berkowitz, 1993). The multi-faceted research on violence has given various explanations for the development of aggressive behaviour encompassing an individual level such as personality characteristics, biological or genetic pre-determinates, and a social level describing the environmental influences on aggression. The simple question, which unfortunately is not as straightforward to answer is "are people born aggressive or is it something they learn to do?".

3.1.1 Genes, Learning and Personality

Lombroso (1876) was one of the first people to theorise that there was a biological determinate for people acting violently. He saw aggression as a primitive instinct within an individual. As this instinct was something the person was born with, this represented a genetic component to violent behaviour. Research has searched for biological abnormalities such as an 'aggressive gene' (see Morell, 1993), differences in neurotransmitters (see Fishbein, 1990) or 'chromosomal anomalies' (Kandel Englander, 1997) to determine if there was such a biological influence, just what was inherited? One idea generated from this inheritance debate was that a biological influence on aggressive behaviour occurred because an anomaly within the nervous system caused limitations on learning from the environment (Rowe, 1990).

This idea of there being a learned or environmental component to aggression arose as a juxtaposition to the strict biological approach which maintains that people are aggressive because

of unchangeable genes or physiology. Eron (1994) however, recognises that a learning approach is perhaps more optimistic "since what is learned can be unlearnt and new ways of behaving can be adopted" (p9).

Within the learning of aggression, one of the most prominent theories is 'social learning theory'. This maintains that people learn to behave from other people; parents, peers, television characters, within their environment. This learning can either be through the direct imitation of another person's behaviour (modelling) or by the process of rewards and punishments (operant conditioning). In the latter case, people will act in a certain way because they have learnt they can gain something from their actions. This moves the social learning debate away from individuals merely copying the actions of others to using their own internal ideas (perceived efficacy of violence) in choosing whether to adopt a particular behaviour.

Nevertheless, the learning of aggression, again cannot be said to be the sole cause of violent behaviour as not all children raised within a violent family become violent themselves. A combination of the two approaches would suggest that there are biological factors which create either a resilience against what they see or create a vulnerability towards the violence (Kandel Englander, 1997). This could be an explanation as to why only 1 in 6 children abused in their homes go on to abuse others (Widom, 1989). The other reason why the learning of aggression cannot provide a full explanation is that longitudinal studies have shown that aggressive behaviour can start very early in a child's lifetime when they are less likely to be surrounded by many environmental influences (Farrington, 1991).

Personality characteristics are also thought to determine if a person will act violently or not. These characteristics include personality disorders (Kandler Englander, 1997), aggression arising from the frustration of an individual's goals being blocked (Berkowitz, 1962), a lack of empathetic concern (Kaplan and Arbuthnot, 1985), a low level of moral reasoning (Thornton and Reid, 1982) and social cognitions leading to perceptions of situations as threatening (Dodge, Bates and Pettit, 1990). An individual's temperament may be a combination of inherited genes and poor socialization practices from parental figures. It must be remembered that individual and

social influences all interplay with each other and therefore no one factor can be placed in a vacuum.

3.1.2 Family, Peers and School

As the family is paramount to the socialization of the child and in providing an environment for the child to grow and learn in, the influence of the family is perhaps one of the most discussed areas in relation to violent behaviour. There are many different aspects to how family background can influence the promotion of violent behaviours for its young members. Impaired relationships between parental figures and children through poor attachment (Kandler Englander, 1997), abuse (Widom, 1989) and/or physical neglect and harsh discipline (Farrington, 1989) all are predictors of violence. For example, parental discipline can be either too harsh and punitive creating coercive family situations or too 'lax' leading to the child behaving exactly how they want (Herbert, 1991).

For some children, experience of violence in their family home can lead to ongoing violence in later life. The 'intergenerational transmission of violence', where violence becomes seen as a normative response to confrontations is heavily discussed in the relevant literature (see Widom, 1989). However, as recognised above, not all children subjected to this kind of adverse experience will carry on the same pattern in their own adult life. Berkowitz (1993) asserts that in whether males, in particular, will copy their abusive fathers depends on their relationship with their mother, their predisposition to act aggressively and the power their father holds over them.

The learning of aggression within the family occurs early in a person's life (Farrington, 1991) and this can be seen as the first stage in poor socialization. The second stage shows that poor social competence leads to a rejection by peers (Patterson, 1986). Interconnected with this is low academic performance (see Rutter and Giller, 1983) which is again associated with violence and aggressive behaviour. This lack of educational achievement can be linked to the actual organisation of the school itself, thereby creating a social influence (Rutter, Maughn, Mortimore,

Ouston and Smith, 1979) or to the individual, which may in turn be determined by other social factors such as a lack of encouragement by parents.

As the above shows, it is extremely hard to determine the exact direction of school and peer influences as they are so interrelated within the wider developmental context. Children who are not achieving at school may find themselves rejected by others and form bonds with those in similar circumstances. In opposition, a sub-culture where school is not seen as important may lead to the child lowering their school performance to gain status from their peers. Agnew (1991) found that delinquent peers only had an influence if group cohesiveness was high. However, peer groups are not solely accountable for the reasons why crimes of different natures are committed.

3.2 AIMS OF CHAPTER

Other factors are also related to an individual being violent and some of these will be discussed in Chapter 8 on delinquency as many factors related to delinquency in general, also account for the adoption of violent behaviour (Farrington, 1995). This current study examined some of the characteristics highlighted above to determine if the offender population studied and in particular the violent offenders, were more likely to possess these personality and background variables associated with violent behaviour than the non-offenders. In subsequent chapters, these variables will be considered not just in their relationship to violent offending behaviour, but to determine if they have an influence on violent film preferences and viewing behaviour between the three groups.

3.3 HYPOTHESES

There was an attempt to match the male samples according to age, intelligence and emotional and behavioural problems, therefore the following null hypotheses are proposed:

A) Within each age group (15 to 17 years and 18 to 21 years), there will be no significant difference between violent young offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders in terms of their mean age.

B) There will be no significant difference between violent young offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders in relation to their levels of intelligence (as measured by the Children's Category Test and The Schonnel Reading Test).

C) There will be no significant difference between violent young offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders in relation to emotional and behavioural problems (as measured by The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder).

However, after reviewing the literature on the characteristics of young offenders the following directional hypotheses are proposed:

1) Violent young offenders will have more violent childhood experiences than non-violent offenders and non-offenders (as measured by The Conflict Tactics Scale).

2) Violent young offenders will have a greater propensity for anger than non-violent and non-offenders (as measured by The Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale and The Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Scale).

3) Violent young offenders will have lower levels of empathy than non-violent offenders and non-offenders (as measured by The Interpersonal Reactivity Index).

4) Violent young offenders will have a lower level of moral development than non-violent offenders and non-offenders (as measured by The Social Reflection Questionnaire).

3.4 METHOD

The initial interview lasting 45 minutes, was given to the individual participants separately from the main film viewing and film interviews and used to gain information on social and intellectual backgrounds of the participants. In this interview, the following tests were given:

In order to measure intelligence, ***The Children's Category Test*** (Boll, 1993) and ***The Schonnel Reading Test*** (see Schonnel and Goodacre, 1974) were used as they correlate highly with standard IQ tests, but were quicker to administer. To measure social and emotional background, three different questionnaires were used: ***The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder*** (Naglieri, LeBuffe, Pfeiffer, 1993) which identified behavioural and emotional problems in adolescents. The school form version of this questionnaire was used, again due to it being shorter and conforming better with the constraints on the length of the interview; ***The Conflicts Tactics Scale*** (Straus, 1979) which identified whether violence was evident in conflict resolution between the participant and their parents and ***The Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale*** (Novaco, 1975) which highlighted anger and aggression felt by participants towards particular situations.

During the pre-film and post-film interviews, ***The Interpersonal Reactivity Index*** (Davis, 1980; 1983) measuring empathy levels and ***The Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Scale*** (Spielberger, 1983; 1991) measuring current and pre-existing anger levels were administered, but the pre-interview results will be discussed in this chapter as characteristics of the participants independent of the film viewing. In a similar manner, the ***Social Reflection Questionnaire*** (Gibbs, Basinger and Fuller, 1992) was administered during the post-film

interview, but again the results are discussed in this chapter to provide an additional psychological characteristic of the participants. This questionnaire describes the stage of moral development that has been reached by the individual.

3.5 RESULTS

3.5.1 Age and Sex

All participants were male with ages ranging from 15 to 21 years. Of the 62 in the 15-17 age group, 24% were 15 years, 29% were 16 years and the majority (47%) were 17 years old. Of the 60 members of the 18-21 age group, 37% were 18 years, 28% were 19 years, 23% were 20 years and the remaining 12% were 21 years old. There was no significant differences in the ages of those in the violent offender, non-violent offender and non-offender groups.

3.5.2 Offence Characteristics

The types of offences committed by participants in the study are important to mention in this current chapter as these were the distinguishing characteristics used to group violent and non-violent offenders. It is necessary to note, that although non-violent offenders had no previous or current convictions for violence it is not possible to account for undetected violent offences they may have committed. In a similar way, violent offenders may also share similarities in offending behaviour with the non-violent offenders as many of the violent offenders also had committed non-violent offences. The following is a representation of the type of offences perpetrated by the participants studied:

Non-Violent Offences: Drug dealing or possession, theft (encompassing theft from shops and car crimes); burglary; receiving and handling stolen goods, fraud, criminal damage and arson (not endangering life), perverting the course of justice and driving offences.

Violent Offences: ABH, section 18 or section 20 wounding (GBH), assaults on police officers, robbery, arson that endangers life, manslaughter, rape and murder.

Although committing any offence is serious, some offences are deemed more serious than others. These include taking someone else's life (whether by manslaughter or murder) and the crime of rape. As shown in Chapter 2, only a minority of offenders (below 2%) committed offences of this extreme nature.

3.5.3 Intelligence - Reading and Category Test Scores

Within the age bands (15-17 years and 18-21 years) the participants were matched on the scores of the Children's Category Test and there were no significant differences between the three groups. Interestingly, there also was no significant age difference in scores on the Children's Category Test and the Schonnel Reading Test.

However, for the overall (15 to 21) sample, the results of the ANOVA showed a difference between the three groups (ANOVA, F= 3.74; df=1; p=0.04) in terms of the number of errors made on the Children's Category Test (Boll, 1993). Further analysis by t-tests, highlighted that offenders, both violent and non-violent had higher mean errors (13.5 and 12.7) than the school/college students (9.7; t-test, t= -2.68; df=88; p=0.009 and t=-1.93; df= 61; p=0.05 respectively), although no such difference existed between the two offender groups. Similarly, with the Schonnel Reading Test, no difference was evident between the reading ability of violent and non-violent offenders, but both offender groups had a lower mean reading age (9.8 and 10.6) than the school and college students (12.3; t-test, t= 4.29; df=57.53; p=0.0001 and t=4.82; df=33.18; p=<0.0001 respectively).

This significant difference was confirmed (Chi-square =14.78; df=1; p=0.001), when the groups were cross-tabulated as to whether they had an adult reading age or not: 63% of offenders did not have an adult age compared to only 25% of school/college students. The fact that a quarter of the

school/college sample (aged 15-21 years) did not have an adult reading age was due to the attempts to match the 'control' non- offender participants to the offenders on intellectual ability by selecting local urban schools and city technical colleges to obtain the non-offending sample.

3.5.4 Behavioural and Emotional Disturbance

No significant differences were found between the three groups in relation to the four sub-scales of the Devereux Scale: interpersonal problems, inappropriate behaviour and feelings, depression or physical symptoms and fears. This was true for both age bands and the sample as a whole.

3.5.5 Conflict Tactics Experienced During Childhood

The Conflict Tactic scale was divided into six sub-categories: reasoning behaviour; emotionally hostile behaviour; crying; threatening behaviour; violence; and severe violence. Some of these variables were dependent on age and these variables will be discussed separately, but, in the main, the results will be discussed for the combined age groups. Conflict tactics were looked at across the three groups, as significant differences were apparent between them.

Before looking at the actual conflict tactics used, it is important to consider who the young person described as their paternal or maternal figure. There was a significant distinction between the three groups in terms of whether the paternal figure was their biological father or their step-father (Chi-square= 15.07; df=2; $p<0.001$). Ninety seven per cent of non-offenders referred to their biological father compared to 64% of violent offenders and 57% of non-violent offenders. The maternal figure referred to was their biological mother for the vast majority of each group (97% of non-offenders, 96% of violent offenders and 100% of non-violent offenders).

Reasoning behaviour: this was used by 92% of all mothers, with little difference ($\pm$ 1%) across the three groups. However, reasoning acts by the young person to their maternal figure were

significantly different between groups: 100% of the school/college students used this tactic in comparison to 84% of both violent and non-violent offenders (Chi-square = 6.38, df=2, p=0.04). A similar pattern was seen for the young person reasoning with their paternal figure: thus, 100% of non-offenders and 76% of offenders, both violent and non-violent, used this tactic (Chi-square = 9.67, df=2, p=0.008). In return, fathers reasoned with all non-offenders, 81% of non-violent offenders and 79% of violent offenders (Chi-square = 8.23, df=2, p=0.016).

Emotionally hostile behaviour and crying: no significant differences were evident between the groups, except for paternal figures, who were more likely to be hostile with violent and non-violent offenders (91% and 95% respectively) than with non-offenders (74%). This was a significant difference (Chi-square = 6.2, df=2, p=0.04)

Threatening behaviour: a similar pattern for threats was found as for hostile acts, with no significant differences between the groups except for threats from the paternal figure. Table 3.1 presents the figures.

Violence and severe violence: there were highly significant differences between the three groups in the utilisation of violent and severely violent behaviour in the resolution of conflict between parents and their children. The exception was use of violence towards the maternal figure, which was low for all respondents (see Table 3.1). Interestingly, violence by the mother did not differentiate the non-violent offenders from the non-offenders, but both were distinguishable from the violent offenders in this respect (Chi-square= 10.71; df=2; p=0.004). By contrast, violence by the father did not significantly differ between violent offender and non-violent offenders but the school/college students reported this at half the rate of the other two groups. However, there were clear differences between all three groups for severe violence by the maternal and paternal figures (see Table 3.1).

The same can be said for violence and severe violence from the young person to the father/stepfather, with clear differences evident between all three groups but always showing the linear relationship of an association between violence and offending behaviour.

Table 3.1: Threat and Violent Conflict Tactics Experienced During Childhood by Group (N=108) (as measured by the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1979)).

	% Violent Offenders (n=45)	% Non Violent Offenders (n=26)	% Non Offenders (n=37)	Chi-square (df=2)
Mother to Son				
Threat	77	73	67	1.1
Violence	71	58	35	10.7**
Severe Violence	47	38	11	12.4**
Son to Mother				
Threat	66	73	77	1.4
Violence	18	8	13	1.4
Severe Violence	11	4	8	1.1
Father to Son	(n=43)	(n=21)	(n=35)	
Threat	81	85	54	9.1*
Violence	79	81	34	20.2**
Severe Violence	61	43	14	17.1**
Son to Father				
Threat	74	65	69	0.7
Violence	67	52	31	10.1*
Severe Violence	47	33	14	9.2*

Note: Chi-Square Analysis
*** = df=2; p<0.01**
**** = df=2; p<0.005**

Physical Punishment and Abuse: overall, the level of violence reported as a conflict tactic in the parent-child relationship was high for all three groups with 47% of non-offenders, 85% of non-violent offenders and 92% of violent offenders being at least pushed, shoved and slapped by their parents.

Even more alarmingly, over two-thirds of violent offenders, nearly half the non- violent offenders and one in six of the school/college students (matched as far as possible for social background) experienced physical abuse (severe violence), although violence between the mother and young person was less frequent, especially for the non-violent offenders (see Table 3.1).

With respect to the young person reporting abusive violence to his parents, this was significantly related to experiencing violent acts from the parent (Chi-square =38.16; df=1; $p<0.0001$), such that for the majority of these respondents, violence was reciprocal in the relationship.

3.5.6 The Frequency of Physical Punishment and Abuse in the Family

The above figures describe solely whether physical punishment and abuse in the family home is present or absent, rather than indicating the frequency of its occurrence. It is therefore hard to differentiate between those families where violence is used atypically and infrequently and those families for whom violence is a more frequent response in ending conflicts or arguments.

The mean frequency of the separate violent and severe violent tactics on the scale, were therefore compared across the three groups to see whether the above between-group differences were maintained in relation to the frequency of violence and severe violence suffered. The following figures only describe the people actually subjected to violence or severe violence by their parents, therefore the decrease in sample sizes from the above analysis reflects this.

3.5.6.1 Violence

This analysis was undertaken on a sub-sample which comprised of 13 (35%) non-offenders, 15 (58%) non-violent offenders and 32 (71%) of violent offenders for violence by their mother and 12 (34%) of non-offenders, 17 (81%) of non-violent offenders and 34 (79%) violent offenders for violence by their father.

There were three different questions related to violence and as shown in Table 3.2, "threw something at the other" and "slapped the other" were significantly different across the three groups when used by the mother (ANOVA, $F=3.58$; $df=2$; $p=0.04$ and $F=3.16$; $df=2$; $p=0.05$ respectively). Further analyses by t-tests showed that there were differences between violent offenders and non-offenders for both of these questions (t-test, $t=-4.49$; $df=22$; $p<0.0001$ and $t=-2.82$; $df=30.62$; $p=0.008$ respectively) with violent offenders being subjected to both forms of violent behaviour more frequently than non-offenders. There was no significant difference between non-violent offenders and non-offenders or between the two offender groups in relation to the frequency of these conflict tactics being used by the mother.

The other item on the scale for violence was "pushed, grabbed or shoved the other" which due to the lack of significance in the above analysis, was compared between offenders and non-offenders. Offenders were significantly likely to be subjected to this tactic more frequently than non-offenders (t-test, $t=4.58$; $df=39$; $p<0.0001$).

For violence being used by the father, only "pushed, grabbed or shoved the other" was significantly different across the three groups (ANOVA, $F=8.36$; $df=2$; $p=0.0007$). This tactic was used significantly more frequently by fathers of violent offenders compared to fathers of non-violent offenders and non-offenders (t-test, $t=-3.23$; $df=38.18$; $p=0.003$ and $t=-6.04$; $df=30$; $p<0.0001$ respectively). There was no difference between non-violent offenders and non-offenders (see Table 3.2).

In the same way as above, the violent tactics which could not distinguish between the three groups, were compared between offenders and non-offenders. Both of these tactics, "threw something at the other" and "slapped the other" were used more frequently by fathers of offenders than by fathers of non-offenders (t-test, $t=4.49$; $df=22$; $p<0.0001$ and $t=4.18$; $df=35$; $p<0.0001$ respectively).

Table 3.2: Mean Frequency of Violence and Severe Violence being used by Parental Figures Towards the Young Person to Resolve Conflicts (N=60 for mother and N=63 for father).

Tactic	Mean Frequency of its Use		
	Violent Offenders	Non-Violent Offenders	Non-Offenders
By Mother	**(n=32)**	**(n=15)**	**(n=13)**
Violence			
Threw something at other	2.96	2.33	2.00**
Pushed, grabbed or shoved other	2.67	2.80	2.00
Slapped the other	2.93	2.40	2.18**
Severe Violence	**(n=21)**	**(n=10)**	**(n=4)**
Hit with a fist, bit, scratched or kicked the other	2.46	2.80	2.00
Hit or tried to hit the other with something	2.75	2.00	2.00*
Beat the other up	2.44	2.00	NA
Threatened with a knife	2.00	2.00	NA
Threatened with a weapon	2.60	2.00	2.00
Used a knife	2.00	2.00	NA
Used a weapon	2.60	2.00	NA
By Father	**(n=34)**	**(n=17)**	**(n=12)**
Violence			
Threw something at other	3.05	2.50	2.00
Pushed, grabbed or shoved other	3.10	2.27	2.00*
Slapped the other	2.81	2.22	2.00
Severe Violence	**(n=26)**	**(n=9)**	**(n=5)**
Hit with a fist, bit, scratched or kicked the other	2.77	3.00	2.00
Hit or tried to hit the other with something	3.09	3.33	2.00
Beat the other up	2.93	2.40	NA
Threatened with a knife	3.20	NA	NA
Threatened with a weapon	3.00	2.00	NA
Used a knife	3.00	NA	NA
Used a weapon	3.43	2.00	NA

Note: ANOVA analysis
*** Trend df=2, p=0.07**
**** df=2, p<0.05**

3.5.6.2 Severe Violence

This analysis of the frequency of severe violence was carried out on a sub-sample comprised of 4 (11%) non-offenders, 10 (38%) non-violent offenders and 21 (47%) violent offenders for severe violence by their mother and 5 (14%) of non-offenders, 9 (43%) non-violent offenders and 26 (61%) of violent offenders for severe violence by their father.

Only one of the seven items representing severe violence by the mother, "hit or tried to hit the other with something" produced a trend when compared across the three groups (ANOVA, $F=2.93$; $df=2$; $p=0.07$) which, when analysed further by t-tests, showed differences between violent offenders and non-violent offenders and between violent offenders and non-offenders (t-test, $t=-3.00$; $df=15$; $p=0.009$ for both comparisons). Mothers of violent offenders used this tactic significantly more frequently than mothers of the other two groups (see Table 3.2).

For all the other items it was not possible to carry out an analysis even on an offender and non-offender level as in the majority of cases, non-offenders had not been subjected to violence of this extreme nature. The one exception was "hit with a fist, bit, scratched or kicked the other" which was compared between offenders and non-offenders and showed that offenders experienced this violent act significantly more frequently than non-offenders (t-test, $t=2.56$; $df=17$; $p=0.02$).

None of the seven comparisons between the three groups in relation to severe violence by the father produced significant results. However, two of the comparisons ("hit with a fist, bit, scratched or kicked the other" and "hit or tried to hit the other with something") between offenders and non-offenders showed that offenders experienced these severe violence tactics from their fathers significantly more than non-offenders (t-test, $t=4.81$; $df=33$; $p<0.0001$ and $t=4.16$; $df=13$; $p=0.001$ respectively).

The other five comparisons for severe violence tactics could not be analysed as non-offenders had not been subjected to severe violence of this type by their fathers.

3.5.7 Witness of Spouse Abuse

The last question which considered conflicts in the home environment concerned the way in which parental figures resolved conflicts (i.e. calmly or violently). A higher proportion of violent offenders witnessed some form of violence between their parental figures than the other two groups (Chi-Square= 12.07; df=2; p=0.002). Forty four per cent of the violent offenders witnessed violence compared to 39% of non-violent offenders and only 9% of non-offenders. All of the non-offenders who witnessed violence saw it on just one occasion, whereas 18% of non-violent offenders and 15% of violent offenders witnessed serious violence (sometimes with the use of a weapon) on a number of occasions, although the actual frequency is not known, as it was not stipulated in the question when it was asked.

3.5.8 Angry Thoughts

Comparison of the mean scores on the Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale for the whole sample only revealed significant differences in the Behavioural and Angry Situational Domains (see Table 3.3). Violent offenders were significantly more verbally aggressive (t-test, t=-2.48; df=69.28; p=0.02 and t=-2.64; df=81.15; p=0.01 respectively) and had more physical confrontational thoughts (t-test, t=-2.05; df=72; p=0.04 and t=-4.69; df=81.99;p<0.0001 respectively) than both non-violent offenders and non-offenders. However, violent offenders scored higher impulsivity scores than non-offenders only (t-test, t=-3.48; df=81.09; p=0.001). Both offender groups were significantly more likely to be irritated by situations than non-offenders (t-test, t=3.64; df=82; p<0.001 for violent offenders and t=-2.61; df=62; p=0.01 for non-violent offenders), but no such difference existed between the two offender groups.

There was also a trend for the violent offenders to be more intensely aroused (ANOVA F=2.60; df=2; p=0.08). When analysed between the different groups, intensity scores were significantly higher for violent offenders when compared to non-offenders (t-test, t=-2.08; df=82; p=0.04), but there was no such significant difference between the other group comparisons.

Table 3.3: Angry Thoughts by Group (N=111) (as measured on the Novaco Reaction to Provocation Scale (Novaco, 1975))

Mean Scores	Violent Offender (n=47)	Non-Violent Offender (n=27)	Non-Offender (n=37)
Attentional Focus	8.08	8.18	8.16
Rumination	7.62	7.63	7.62
Hostile Attitude	7.72	7.78	7.19
Suspicion	7.74	8.11	7.51
COGNITIONS DOMAIN	(31.16)	(31.68)	(30.48)
Intensity	8.49	7.70	7.05*
Duration	7.06	6.81	6.51
Tension	6.64	7.18	6.24
Irritability	7.23	7.37	7.51
AROUSAL DOMAIN	(29.40)	(29.04)	(27.32)
Impulsive	7.98	6.85	6.21***
Verbal Aggression	8.96	7.81	7.81***
Physical Confrontation	8.83	7.78	6.78****
Indirect Expression	6.51	6.37	6.48
**BEHAVIOUR DOMAIN	(32.28)	(28.80)	(27.28)**
Disrespect	13.45	13.33	13.08
Unfairness	15.15	14.37	14.10
Frustration	14.90	14.15	13.59
Annoying traits	13.96	12.78	13.59
Irritations	13.11	12.59	10.54***
*ANGRY SITUATIONS DOMAIN	(70.57)	(67.20)	(64.90)*

Note: ANOVA analysis

*** Trend, F=2.60, df=2, p<0.08**

**** F=3.00, df=2, p<0.05**

***** F=4.61, df=2, p<0.01**

****** F=10.75, df=2, p<0.001**

Surprisingly, there were age band differences on some of the sub-scales of this assessment. For the 15 to 17 age band, there were fewer differences on the sub-scales. This implies that the offenders interviewed in the 15-17 age band are only marginally more likely to react aggressively to provocation than the school students.

The differences between the groups in the 18 to 21 age band were more dramatic. This accounts for why differences remain significant for the whole sample, despite the similarities between their younger counterparts (see Table 3.3).

3.5.9 Angry Personalities

In order to clarify the results given below, the following is a brief reminder of the terms used in the Spielberger State-Trait Anger and Anger Expression Scales which were discussed in full in Chapter 2.

- **State Anger** - the intensity of anger felt at a given time.

- **Trait Anger** - an individual's disposition to experience anger.

- **Anger Expression** - whether anger is suppressed **(Anger In)**; expressed outwards to others **(Anger Out)** or attempted to be controlled **(Anger Control)** and the general frequency of anger expression regardless of the direction to where it is expressed **(Anger Expression)**

The assessment prior to film viewing found there were no differences across the three groups for levels of State Anger on the State Trait Anger Scale and for Anger In, Anger Control and Anger Expression on the Anger Expression Scale. A further comparison showed that again no differences existed between the total offender sample and the non-offender school/college sample on these measures.

On the State Anger measure, the means for all groups were low (the minimum score possible was 10 if the respondent answers "not at all" for all questions). This would suggest that all participants were relaxed with the procedures.

Three aspects of these scales - Trait Anger, Trait Anger (temperament) and Anger Expression Outwards - were significantly different between the groups. In both age bands the violent offenders had significantly higher mean scores than both non-violent offenders and the school/college students (see Table 3.4). This means they had a more aggressive temperament and were more likely to display this anger outwards (at other people and at objects) than the other two groups. There was no such difference between non-violent offenders and the comparison school/college sample. All raw scores fell within the 'normal' range for prison inmates and male adolescents which indicated that neither sample was atypical (had above or below standardised anger levels) for their respective groups (Spielberger, 1991).

Table 3.4: Angry personality by Group (prior to viewing film, N=122) (as measured on the Spielberger State Trait Anger and Anger Expression Scales (Spielberger, 1983, 1991)).

Mean Scores (Pre-Film)	Violent Offenders (n=54)	Non-Violent Offenders (n=28)	Non-Offenders (n=40)
State Anger	11.09	12.71	11.65
Trait Anger	23.57	20.63	21.27**
Temperament	9.41	7.14	7.13****
Reaction	9.04	8.89	9.95
Anger Expression	32.78	29.96	32.35
Anger-In	17.42	18.43	18.25
Anger-Out	18.81	16.04	17.80**
Anger-Control	19.26	21.21	19.70

Note: ANOVA analysis
**** F=3.42, df=2, p<0.04**
******F=8.48, df=2, p<0.001**

3.5.10 Empathy and Perspective Taking

Four different aspects of empathy were assessed: 'Perspective Taking'; 'Empathetic Concern'; 'Fantasy'; and 'Personal Distress'. Two of these, 'Perspective Taking' and 'Fantasy' (having the ability to identify with fictional characters) were analysed for the combined sample of both age bands, with only the 'Perspective Taking, measure being significantly different in the ANOVA analysis of the three groups. When it was analysed more closely, there were no significant differences between violent and non-violent offenders or non-violent offenders and school students, but differences did emerge between the violent offenders group and the school students (t-test, t= 2.84; df=92; p=0.006), with the school group having a higher ability to take other's perspectives. The 'Fantasy' measure, analysed between offenders and non-offenders showed that the school students (non-offenders) more readily identified with fictional characters (t-test, t=1.95; df=96.13; p=0.05) than the young offenders.

Table 3.5: Empathy and Interpersonal Reactivity by Group (Prior to Film Viewing, N=122) (as measured by the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980;1983))

Mean Score (Pre-Film):	500 male USA College Students Davis (1980)	Violent Offenders (N=54)	Non-Violent Offenders (n=28)	Non Offenders (n=40)
Perspective Taking	(16.78)	13.26	13.96	15.65**
Empathetic Concern	(19.04)	17.31	16.53	18.52
Fantasy	(15.73)	13.42	14.00	15.50
Personal Distress	(9.46)	10.98	13.21	11.60*
Interpersonal Reactivity Total		54.62	57.70	61.27**

Note: ANOVA analysis
***Trend, F=2.67, df=2, p=0.07**
****F=3.78, df=2, p<0.03**

The other two empathy measures, 'Empathetic Concern' and 'Personal Distress' showed significant differences related to age and so were analysed for both age bands separately. For each sample (15 to 17 and 18 to 21), both the non-offenders and the non-violent offenders were able to share the negative emotions of others ('Personal Distress') more than the violent offenders, although only the comparison between non-offenders and violent offenders for the former age group reached significance (t-test, t=2.20; df=45; p=0.03).

Comparing all offenders and non-offenders (aged 15-17) on the measure of 'Empathetic Concern' showed that the school students were more likely to feel concern for others than the offenders as a whole (t-test, t=2.14; df=59.87; =0.04). However, the same could not be said for the older 18-21 age band, as none of the above measures when analysed separately, significantly differentiated the three groups.

On the total IRI scores, a higher level of empathy was evident for the student sample than the offending groups. However, the non-violent offenders also scored higher than the violent offenders on the total IRI scores, showing that, overall, empathy significantly decreased with anti-social and violent behaviour (see Table 3.5).

3.5.11 Moral Development and Reasoning

The scores for the Social Reflection Questionnaire (SRM-SF) were adapted to dichotomous variables representing immature and mature levels of moral development (Gibbs, Basinger and Fuller, 1992) for ease of analysis between the groups. No participants scored as being at Stage 1 or Stage 4 on the questionnaire reflecting that no individuals had an exceptionally immature or mature level of moral development.

Surprisingly, there were no significant differences in the level of moral development between the 15-17 and the 18-21 age bands. Therefore, the total combined age sample was compared across the three groups (see Table 3.6).

Table 3.6: Moral Development by Groups (N=110) (as Measured by the Social Reflection Questionnaire (Gibbs, Basinger and Fuller, 1992))

Moral Development	Violent Offenders (n=47)		Non-Violent Offenders (n=25)		Non-Offenders (n=38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
LEVEL ONE AND TWO (Immature)	25	(53)	15	(60)	5	(13)*
LEVEL THREE AND ABOVE (Mature)	22	(47)	10	(40)	33	(87)*

Note: Chi-square Analysis
*** Chi-Square = 18.8, df=2; p<0.0001**

The collation of data into dichotomous variables hides the fact that some individuals may have scores representing transitions between two stages of moral development. Table 3.7, therefore, shows a breakdown of results to provide an additional level of description to the findings presented in Table 3.6.

Table 3.7: Breakdown of Moral Development Stages for Groups including Transitional Levels based on Social Reflection Questionnaire (Gibbs, Basinger, Fuller, 1992) (N=110)

	Violent Offenders (n=47)		Non-Violent Offenders (n=25)		Non-Offenders (n=38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Level 2 or below	15	(32)	7	(28)	1	(2.5)
Transition 2/3	10	(21)	8	(32)	4	(10.5)
Transition 3/2	17	(36)	3	(12)	9	(24)
Level 3 or above	5	(11)	7	(28)	24	(63)

Note: This table demonstrates frequency only, as the samples were too small to be subjected to a Chi-square analysis.

Table 3.6 shows that 53% of the violent offenders and 60% of non-violent offenders had a low or immature moral development (levels one or two). However, as Table 3.7 indicates, 21% of violent offenders and 32% of non-violent offenders scored in the transitional Stage 2/3. In contrast, only 13% of school/college students scored in the 'immature' moral category with the majority of these scoring in the transition stage (2/3), despite matching as far as possible for intellectual and social background.

The majority of students (87%) had a high or mature moral development (level 3 or above), although 24% of non-offenders did score in the transitional stage 3/2. This means that there were still immature elements of moral reasoning within their otherwise mature moral development. However, a clear majority of non-offenders (63%) had reached a mature level of moral development as represented by scoring at Stage 3 and above.

Fewer offenders of both types had reached the same stage of moral development as the non-offender comparison group. Under half (47% for violent offenders and 40% for non-violent offenders) scored as being at Stage 3 and above for their moral reasoning (see Table 3.6). Nevertheless, there were more non-violent offenders (28%) than violent offenders (11%) within this 'mature' category.

Due to the small samples making this more detailed statistical analysis difficult to interpret, the groups were analysed by Chi-square based on the dichotomous comparison shown in Table 3.6. The difference between the groups' moral development was highly significant when analysed for this immature or mature distinction (Chi-square=18.8; df=2; p=0.00008). This finding also held true when the recoded global scores were subjected to an ANOVA analysis (ANOVA, F=9.00; df=2; p=0.0002). To compare between the different groups, independent sample tests were utilised which identified significant differences between violent offenders and non-offenders (t-test, t=4.18; df=92; p=0.0001) and between non-violent offenders and non-offenders (t-test, t=2.84; df=65; p=0.006). No such distinction was found between the two offender groups indicating that the level of moral reasoning was not differentiated by offence type.

3.6 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

3.6.1 Null Hypotheses

Not all the null hypotheses proposed as a function of matching the samples could be accepted. Although the sample were matched on age and emotional and behavioural problems, the same could not be said for intelligence. This meant that null Hypothesis A), within each age group (15 to 17 years and 18 to 21 years), there will be no significant difference between violent young offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders in terms of their mean age and null Hypothesis C), there will be no significant difference between violent young offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders in relation to emotional and behavioural problems (as measured by The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder) were accepted.

However, the level of intelligence was not comparable across the three groups as offenders scored lower on the Schonnel Reading Test and The Children's Category Test than non-offenders. This meant that Hypothesis B), there will be no significant difference between violent young offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders in relation to their levels of intelligence, had to be rejected.

3.6.2 Directional Hypotheses

The results from the Conflict tactics scale do identify that violent offenders are significantly more likely to be subjected to violence and severe violence by their parents than the other two groups. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 which asserted that violent young offenders will have more violent childhood experiences than non-violent offenders and non-offenders was upheld.

In the same way, Hypothesis 2, that violent young offenders will have a greater propensity for anger than non-violent and non-offenders could also be upheld. Violent offenders were shown to have more of an aggressive temperament than the other two groups as measured by The

Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale. In addition, this hypothesis was strengthened by the results of the Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale, which showed that violent offenders were more likely to score higher on the behavioural reaction part of the scale (Behaviour Domain) than non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

The overall Interpersonal Reactivity Index Score which measured empathy was significantly lower for violent offenders than the other two groups. This meant that Hypothesis 3, which proposed that violent young offenders will have lower levels of empathy than non-violent offenders and non-offenders, could also be accepted.

However, the final directional hypothesis asserted, that violent young offenders will have a lower level of moral development than non-violent offenders and non-offenders, cannot be fully upheld. Although both groups of offenders had a lower level of moral development than the non-offenders, the results did not show that violent offenders scored lower than non-violent offenders on the Social Reflection Questionnaire.

Based on the acceptance of Null Hypothesis C (related to The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder) it can be claimed that the differences emerging in moral development, empathy, violent conflict tactics and angry thoughts and personality are not a function of mental disorder. A similar lack of distinction across the three groups on the Devereux Scale was found at the 3-4 month and 9-10 month follow up interviews. These findings eliminate the possible confounding influences of mental health.

As it was apparent that the groups could not be matched for intelligence, it was therefore important to control for the effects of this. In order to complete this, the findings reported in this chapter, were analysed controlling for intelligence (by means of the Schonnel Reading Test). The majority of these findings were independent of the intellectual ability of the respondent as there was not an effect on violent conflict tactics, moral development or trait anger from intelligence However, scores for the Behavioural Domain on the Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale and the total score for empathy measured by the Interpersonal Reactivity Index appeared to only

significantly distinguish the different groups when a low level of intelligence was present. This significance disappeared when the groups were compared again for individuals classified as having a higher intelligence level.

3.7 DISCUSSION

The findings in this chapter indicate that there were significant differences between the groups in terms of their personality characteristics and family background. Some differences were more evident between the offender and non-offender groups than between violent and non-violent offenders. This may be due to the fact that existing research has shown that these characteristics are more prevalent in people who commit delinquent acts in general (Farrington, 1995) and therefore, both groups of offenders; those who only commit non-violent crimes and those who commit violent crimes have distinct psychological traits, family background or intelligence levels from non-offenders.

Having said this, some characteristics did show a further differentiation between violent offenders and non-violent offenders. This implies perhaps, that there are particular detrimental personality traits or adverse family circumstances which are indicative of people who are convicted for violent acts by being more pronounced than those characteristics which distinguish antisocial individuals, convicted for non-violent offences, from non-offending individuals.

3.7.1 Intelligence

The results of the intelligence measures indicate that a lower level of intelligence is a characteristic of offenders, in general, than for the non-offenders studied. This is in accord with the previous research which has shown "a modest but highly consistent association between academic ability, including IQ, and delinquency" (Hollin, 1992, p. 86). However, academic ability is distinct from academic performance and it is the latter of these which has the stronger

relationship with delinquent behaviour. Children who have a successful school performance are less likely to be committing delinquent acts. Farrington (1995) found that adolescent offenders were more likely to play truant and to leave school at an earlier age without completing their exams.

Despite the overall association between intelligence or academic success and delinquency, it has not be concluded by researchers in the area that this one variable produces delinquent behaviour in a simplistic linear fashion. "It is highly unlikely that school performance in itself causes delinquency, the developmental chain of events predicting delinquent behaviour stretches back to the pre-school ages. It is more likely that the school acts as an environmental catalyst in which, rather than originate, conduct problems develop, intensify and take on new forms" (Hollin, 1992 p.87).

This author's quote signifies again, the interplay of individual and social variables as both parental influence, even from a pre-school age, and peer influences amalgamate together to become important predictors of delinquent behaviour alongside school factors (Hollin, 1992). These can all combine together, creating in the individual a hostile attitude towards school resulting in low academic performance and truancy. This is then amplified with the adolescent leaving school without qualifications or in the extreme cases, without basic academic achievements such as reading levels appropriate to their ages.

3.7.2 Personality Characteristics and Family Background

Within the study of violent behaviour, one aspect of importance is the stability of aggression over time. It has been shown that early aggression is predictive of aggression in adolescence and adulthood (McGuire, 1997). This pattern appears to have both biological and environmental roots which lead to the aggressive child becoming a violent adult. As the introduction to this chapter draws attention to, an individual can inherit dispositions to behave in certain ways, collectively known as a person's 'temperament' (McGuire, 1997). These dispositions have some biological

basis, but the general notion is that these characteristics cannot consistently cause aggressive behaviour throughout the transition from childhood to adulthood without environmental influences (Calkins and Fox, 1994). Therefore, these two aspects have been combined together under one section to illustrate the difficulty in considering them separately as predictors of violent and aggressive behaviour.

The violent offenders were more likely to possess aggressive personality traits than both the other two groups with particular emphasis being placed on the expression of anger towards others. This development of an aggressive personality through biological and social influences has already been discussed to some extent, but little has been said about their impact on the cognitions of the individual. This cognitive element is instrumental in determining whether the person will act aggressively or not as without cognitions, people cannot label themselves or others likely to act violently because anger is a feeling which needs to be interpreted as such.

Research has found that violent people may react to situational cues in a different way from people who do not possess the same characteristics (these emotional reactions in turn, can be biologically or socially based). Therefore, people who are aggressive may see other people as acting aggressively towards them in ambiguous situations, have limited interpersonal or interactional skills and be more likely to label their own arousal as anger (McGuire, 1997). This has serious implications for the development of a treatment programme for violent individuals as it would be extremely difficult to teach a violent person to act non-violently to situations which they perceive as threatening (Kandler Englander, 1997).

Coinciding with having an aggressive temperament, the violent offenders in this study were also found to have a lower level of empathy than non-violent offenders and non-offenders. This coupling together of these two particular characteristics would appear to be logical because it is probable that an individual with a high level of empathetic concern for others would inhibit their aggressive tendencies. The other reason why this pattern of characteristics would be evident together is that poor socialization within the family environment can be held responsible for an individual developing a lack of concern for others and this can also influence an individual's

predispositions to be aggressive. Inadequate socialization can lead to the child having no experience of being understood, thus, they develop a poor self-concept and a lack of inclination to be empathetic or see things from another's perspective (Kaplan and Arbuthnot, 1985).

This poor socialization by parental figures could also be responsible for offenders having a lower level of moral development than non-offenders. As there was no difference between the two types of offender groups, low moral development could be a contributor to anti-social behaviour in general rather than specifically for aggressive behaviour. This process of a continuation of moral standards throughout familial generations has been shown by Jurkovic (1980), who found that mothers of delinquents had lower levels of moral maturity than mothers of non-delinquents. However, Jurkovic (1980) does state, that although social factors do need to be taken into account, moral development is not just a learned characteristic, but is instead a developmental process the child moves through and adapts to as he/she gets older.

Studies have shown that in the same way that empathy can be seen as a precursor to aggressive behaviour it can also be seen as an antecedent to moral development. For example, Eisenberg-Berg and Mussen (1978) found a correlation between the two, with empathy representing the predisposing factor. They also linked their findings to family upbringing and demonstrated that highly empathetic boys had non-punitive, affectionate mothers.

The finding of the current study regarding a difference in empathy levels between offenders and non-offenders is similar to work carried out by Kaplan and Arbuthnot (1985). They found marginal support for offenders having a lower ability to share another's emotions. Chandler (1973) however, found more substantiated evidence than Kaplan and Arbuthnot (1985) that delinquents were less able to take another person's perspective than non-delinquents. Nevertheless, Chandler (1973) expounds that egocentric thoughts are not limited to delinquents and that any research, including his own, which studies convicted offenders, must be regarded cautiously because detected or known offenders may not validly represent offenders who have not been caught.

Unlike the studies on empathetic levels in offenders and non-offenders, the various studies on moral development have highlighted a difference between offence type and the offender's moral maturity. Thornton and Reid (1982) claim that offenders with a low level of moral development would judge the probability of getting caught as important when deciding whether various criminal acts are right or wrong. They discovered that young offenders who committed non-financial crimes such as assaults had higher moral judgements than those who committed financially rewarding crimes like burglaries. These results contrast to the findings of the current study where no such distinction occurred between the two sets of offenders studied. This could be due to Thornton and Reid's (1982) classification system which coded offenders on the basis of their most recent serious offence. This meant that offenders could have committed crimes of a completely different nature earlier in their 'criminal career', thus creating biased findings.

However, there may be other factors creating this inconsistency between the current study and existing research as Jurkovic (1980) also highlights the heterogeneity of morality within the offender population. He states that this pattern is not random and that psychosocial differences may be at work, for example, offenders had higher levels of moral development if they were in for drug offences, experienced guilt and exhibited less psychopathic traits. In this study, offenders convicted for drug offences were equally divided between the violent offender and non-violent offender groups.

The measurement instrument itself may cause difficulty in the direct comparison of studies , as has been highlighted by Gibbs, Basinger and Fuller (1992). They differentiated between production tasks (making moral judgements and evaluating moral values) and recognition tasks (evaluation of moral reasoning without actually having to produce reasoning statements) and showed that production tasks had greater efficacy at distinguishing between delinquents from non-delinquents.

3.7.3 The Particular Case of Violence in the Family

Although the above discussion has shown that the family can have a detrimental impact on the child's aggression, empathy and moral development levels through the transmission of poor socialization practices, the specific learning of violence within the family context can also not be ignored.

The concept of victim to offender (when a person who has been victimised during their life then goes on to victimise others) is exemplified by this study as a higher proportion of violent offenders than non-violent offenders or non-offenders had suffered violence from both their parents and also responded with aggression to their parents.

However, it has to be remembered that not all people from violent homes, in turn become offenders (Widom, 1989). Indeed, for some people this early victimisation can lead to a life-time of vulnerability and victimisation inside and outside the home environment where it first started (Hamilton and Browne, 1998). As shown in the introduction for this chapter, other factors such as the lack of angry temperament or high moral standards may act as protective factors to break the victim to offender cycle (Falshaw, Browne and Hollin, 1996).

3.8 SUMMARY

The findings of this chapter illustrate that the offenders, particularly the violent offenders, who participated in this study are more likely to have individual characteristics representing a higher level of an aggressive personality and to be subjected to violent family experiences than non-violent offenders (in the main) and non-offenders. The following chapter discusses the viewing habits of the participants with attention focussed on how the characteristics described in this current chapter interact with viewing preferences and whether these pre-existing influences deviate between the three groups studied.

CHAPTER 4: VIEWING HABITS AND PREFERENCES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

An important consideration in the discussion of film violence and its influence on the adolescent audience is whether young people actually like to watch violent films and do they actively seek out these as a form of media entertainment? However, the more essential question to ask for this particular research project is, do adolescents who commit violent offences select more violent film material, watch greater amounts of film and enjoy the violent content more than those who have not committed such an act? That is to say, do people with violent tendencies show a greater preference for films of a violent nature?

Huesmann and Eron (1986) found that in their cross-national television study, the children classified as the most aggressive, watched more television in general and preferred violent films more than their less aggressive counterparts. Belson (1978), in his study on delinquents, said that aggressive people sought out more violent material.

However, one of the most recent studies which examined this particular issue produced very different results. Hagell and Newburn (1994) compared the viewing habits of 78 young offenders and over 500 school children aged between 12 and 18 years. The results showed that the viewing habits of the two groups were very similar. For example, when asked to name their favourite film, males in both groups gave the same violent video, "Terminator 2".

One distinction which arose was that the young offenders were more likely to say that "The Bill" (a British police drama) was their favourite television programme rather than the soaps (mainly Australian) named by the school children. The authors claimed that this could have been due to the connection between the content of the police series with real life experiences of the young people who had been arrested at some point in their lives.

The offenders questioned were mainly non-violent, although 30 had either a caution or conviction for a violent offence in the year they were studied. These violent offenders, again did not appear to form a distinctive group in terms of their viewing habits with the same television programmes and films being named as their favourites as those given above. This was in accordance with Menzies' (1971) findings that the viewing habits of violent and property offenders (non-violent) were no different. However, a methodological consideration to note is that the study was conducted with incarcerated offenders whose current viewing behaviour may not be representative of "outside" media exposure (Menzies, 1971).

Halloran, Brown and Chaney (1970) found similar results to Hagell and Newburn's study when they compared probationers and non-probationers. They concluded that although there were no differences between the two groups in the actual programmes viewed, differences occurred in the perceptions of the programmes and in the uses people got from what they viewed. The probationers sought material which gratified their need for excitement and danger. However, the authors' suggestion that being a delinquent merely increases the tastes which are features of the working class subculture (Halloran, Brown and Chaney, 1970), highlights an important aspect in the interpretation of the results; that the differences in viewing behaviours could be explained by social class distinctions rather than offending behaviour. Indeed, Van der Voort (1986) showed that children from the lower social classes were heavy viewers and had greater enjoyment for violent programmes.

4.1.1 Uses and Gratification of Violent Screen Material

Despite the existing viewing habits and preferences research allowing an insight into the choice of material watched by different people, there is little emphasis on why they watch particular types of programmes and films or what they gain from their viewing experience. Viewers are motivated to watch the television screen (with all kinds of content) in order to satisfy their needs and desires at that time. Put at the most basic level, people watch television for a reason, even if it's just to pass the time (Gunter and McAleer, 1997).

The 'uses and gratifications' approach is already seen by some as an extension to the more traditional body of work on the influence of screen violence (for example, Bryant and Zillmann, 1991). The advantage of this approach is that it allows researchers to look at the 'internal effects', such as pleasure and stimulation, gained from the viewed material. However, despite providing knowledge of viewers' psychological needs and preferences, this approach cannot also describe the behavioural effects of viewing violent media (such as whether it increases aggression) which has previously been the main focal point of research within this area (Gauntlett, 1995).

4.1.2 The Impact of Family Background on Viewing Preferences and Uses of Violent Media

Before outlining the hypothesis and methods for this chapter, it is necessary to amalgamate the areas discussed above. It has already been found that family background and social class status are contributory factors in viewing behaviour (see van der Voort, 1986) and many researchers have linked the influence of the family to viewing preferences and to the motivations controlling such viewing behaviour.

Parental influence on the different types of programmes and film material watched by their children and why these are watched occurs at many levels, from setting rules for television viewing, which may limit the hours of viewing, to actual censoring or disallowing viewing based on content. Unfortunately as many authors have noted, it is the children from dysfunctional families (maybe due to inadequate socialization and parenting techniques), who are most vulnerable to screen images, yet, it is these parents who exercise less control over viewing behaviour (Vine, 1994).

This present study was unable to investigate the influence of socio-economic status as this information was not collated. However, the influence of family background was examined with relation to violence in the family home, as this has been shown to have an impact on viewing behaviour and preferences (see Heath, Krutschnitt and Ward, 1986). Hill (1997) describes how

some people's experience of real life violence can lead to the desire to watch violence within a fictional context.

4.2 AIMS OF CHAPTER

As shown in Chapter 3, violent offenders in this study are significantly more likely to come from violent homes than non-violent offenders and non-offenders and the aim of this Chapter is to look at this presence of parental violence in relation to the viewing habits reported by the participants.

4.3 HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis is put forward for this chapter:

> Violent young offenders will view video films more often than non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

4.4 METHOD

During the pre-film interview, which took place immediately prior to the viewing of the video film, a questionnaire was given to the participants asking them about their viewing habits related to television programmes and films and video films. These questions were asked in order to compare violent offenders with non-violent offenders and non-offenders on the amount of films viewed, the type of films viewed and their favourite films and actors.

The viewing habits of the participants were also looked at in relation to family background with emphasis on violent family backgrounds. In order to accomplish this, the viewing habits data was compared across the groups dependent on whether they had experienced or witnessed violence

within the family home, as measured by ***The Conflict Tactics Scale*** (Straus, 1979). This questionnaire was given during the separate initial psychological assessment interview.

4.5 RESULTS

When the viewing habits and preferences of violent and non-violent offenders were compared, there were few variables which differentiated these two groups. (These will be discussed separately). In the main, therefore, the results will be a comparison of offenders and non-offenders. This homogeneity of the offender sample is surprising as it indicates that violent offenders do not have preferences for violent films or identify with violent characters more than the non-violent sample as was hypothesised. Nevertheless, there were many significant differences between the offender and non-offender samples.

4.5.1 Institutional Regime and Viewing Habits

In a comparison of offenders and non-offenders, it needs to be recognised that there may be a situational component to their respective viewing habits. Offenders in the secure institutions were governed by a strict daily regime which restricted the amount of television and films watched, the time at which they are watched and indeed the choice of what is watched. The following institutional constraints on young offenders' viewing habits are descriptions of the two secure institutions from which the samples were taken. The researchers did not have evidence about the restrictions on offenders' viewing habits from other secure institutions.

In the HMYOI, there were different levels of regime on which young offenders can be placed. As the regime level increased so did the level of benefits, which led to an increase in the choice of what is watched and, to a certain extent, when. For the majority of offenders, there was one room with a television and video (with access to satellite television). Obviously, this poses an immense restriction as to what is watched, with it being very difficult for an individual to have full control

over what is shown.

Another factor was that the video was in a locked cupboard which can only be opened by members of staff. This suggests that offenders will have to ask permission before viewing a video film or a film videoed from satellite TV and therefore will not be able to video exactly what they want to see. However, the use of video recording means that offenders are able to access films from satellite channels which are on after they have been locked up in their cells for the night. This is an important consideration as association time in the evening (when viewing can occur) was between 6.00pm and 8.00pm thus limiting inmates either to watching what is programmed for this time by the various broadcasting networks or to programmes they have recorded previously.

On the enhanced regime, slightly fewer restrictions existed, as a small number of people shared a television and video in a separate room. In the evening they still had the same association time as the rest of the wing. However, they were given more opportunities in the day to watch more television, but not for substantial periods of time (for example, between coming back from work or education and having dinner). Again these young men were able to video from satellite or terrestrial television after association time and had more freedom in their choice as there were fewer of them to decide what they wanted to record.

In the residential centre, the restrictions were not as great. A level system of privileges is again applied, based on the resident's behaviour. Privileges allowed some residents to have televisions in their own rooms (some with access to satellite channels) and at the highest privilege level they had access to electricity on a 24 hour basis.

They were also allowed to "book" the video recorder in the unit so that they could watch personal videos. Care workers monitored as far as possible what videos are viewed. In the communal areas of the units, video and television films were restricted, dependent on the age of the youngest person present.

Despite the above restrictions, in both of the institutional settings visited there was some evidence of young people watching age-inappropriate television material and pre-recorded video films. Evidence for inappropriate viewing within institutions is based on reports from a minority of the offenders and the author's incidental observations while working in the institutions.

In the present study the situational element was not emphasised and the majority of young offenders answered about their general viewing habits and preferences, taking account of their life outside prison.

4.5.2 Television Viewing

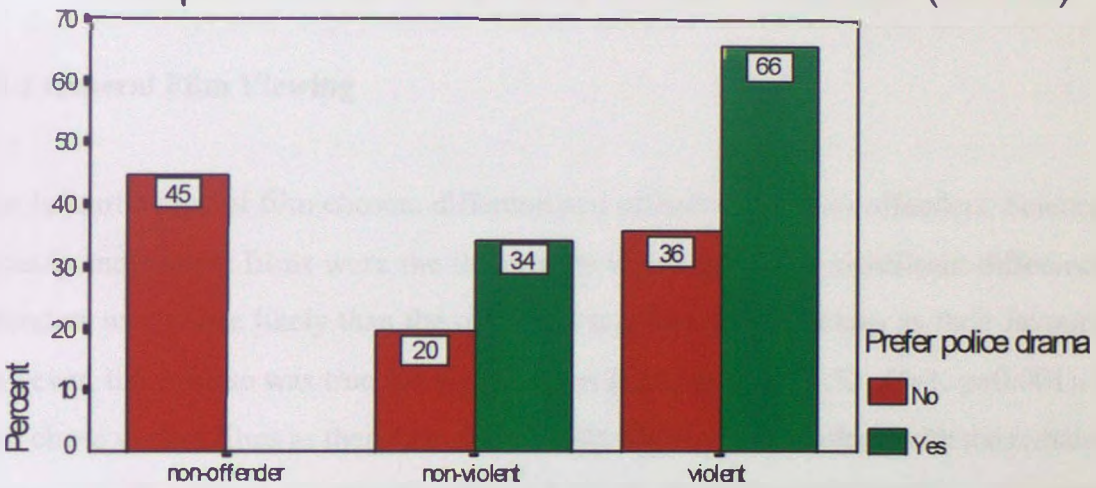
Offenders were found to spend more time watching TV films per week than school/college students: 53% of offenders watched three or more days a week whereas the majority of school/college students (72%) watched only one or two days. However, when they were actually watching films there was no difference in the total number of hours spent per day doing this. The time of the day when they most frequently watched films does significantly differ between the two groups (Chi-square= 14.27; df=1; p= 0.0002), with school/college students being more likely to watch after the nine o'clock watershed. Nearly 100% of the non-offender sample watched films after this time compared to 65% of offenders.

When asked about the type of television programmes they liked to watch, there were again significant differences between groups. Offenders were significantly more likely to choose soap operas and police dramas such as "The Bill", with nearly three quarters (74%) saying they favoured soap operas and 40% choosing police programmes (Chi-square= 15.84; df=1; p=<0.0001 and Chi-square= 21.33; df=1; p=<0.0001 respectively). This was in direct contrast to 35% of school students choosing soap operas and none naming the police dramas as one of their favourite programmes (see Figure, 4.1). The offenders' preference for programmes about the police is interesting as they have more experience of criminal acts and being involved with the police. Indeed, when questioned why they liked them, 30% said it was the realistic nature

of the programmes.

Offenders were significantly less likely to choose science-fiction, sports or comedy programmes than the non-offenders ($p<0.001$). Ninety per cent of offenders did not mention sci-fi programmes, although a third of the non-offender sample did chose them (Chi-square=13.04; df=1; p=0.0003). Nearly ninety per cent of offenders failed to name a comedy or sports programme either, compared to 53% of non-offenders (Chi-square=14.94; df=1; p=0.0001) and 64% of non-offenders (Chi-square=10.22; df=1; p=0.001) respectively.

Fig 4.1: Preference for Police Drama Series by Groups from Violent and Non-Violent Families (N=119)



4.5.3 Video Viewing

As with television viewing patterns, offenders spent significantly more time watching video films than non-offenders (Chi-square=21.42; df=1; $p<0.0001$). Nearly two thirds of offenders watched more than two days a week compared to only 20% of school students. The majority of both groups watched up to five videos a week although a greater number of the offenders watched

more than five (Chi-square= 13.71; df=1; p=0.0002). Just over a third of offenders watched more than five videos, while only 5% of non-offenders watched this number.

4.5.4 Satellite Viewing

The majority of offenders (84%) compared to only 40% of school/college students, said they watched satellite films. This could be due to access to satellite television which offenders in prison have at their disposal. Of those who watched satellite films, there were no differences in terms of the amount watched.

4.5.5 General Film Viewing

The favourite type of film chosen, differentiated offenders and non-offenders. Science fiction, comedy and violent films were the three types which produced significant differences. Non-offenders were more likely than the offenders to choose the first two as their favourite types. However, the reverse was true for violent films (Chi-square =14.33, df=1, p=0.001). Of those who chose violent films as their favourite (n=44), 89% were offenders, with the remaining 11% being non-offenders. Interestingly, when asked why they liked violent films, just over half of offenders who said they liked violent films, claimed that it was because they liked to see violence. Only one of the school students gave the same response.

There was a difference between violent and non-violent offenders in whether they chose action films as their favourite type. Violent offenders were less likely to choose this type of film than the other two groups. There was no difference between the non-violent offenders and the school students, with 42% of both groups choosing action films as their favourite type of film.

In answer to the question "if you could be anyone in a film, who would you be", no significant differences were found between the groups regarding whether they would be a violent character

or not. However, when asked "why they would be that character", a significant difference emerged (Chi-square= 5.3; df=1; p=0.02). One fifth of offenders (20%) compared to 5% of non-offenders. said they would be that character "because they were violent". A similar distinction was found when comparing favourite actors (such as Jean Claude van Damme and Stephen Seagel) grouped according to whether they were mainly associated with "violent" characters. The majority of offenders (64%) chose one of these actors in response to the question, but only one quarter (25%) of school/college students did so (Chi-square= 13.91; df=1; p=0.0001).

No significant distinctions could be made between the two groups in terms of the certificate of the video named as their favourite or as the last one they watched. Just over 70% of both groups named an 18 certificate film as their favourite or as the last one they had watched. It is relevant to note that the lower age group are not legally allowed to watch 18 certificate videos. Despite this, there was no difference between the two age groups as to whether they named an 18 certificate video as one of their favourites, suggesting that they are watching them as much as their older counterparts. For the age groups analysed separately, there was no significant difference between offender and non-offender groups in choosing as their favourite a video that had an 18 certificate. These results show that the young people in the sample are watching films not certified as appropriate for their age group. This is important to remember when looking at the film interview questions for the lower age group (15 to 17 years), as the film shown to the participants was age appropriate and may have been considered 'tame' compared to the 18 certificate films they usually watched.

4.5.6 Film Classification and Certificates

Significantly fewer school students than offenders said that films should not be given a certification (Chi-square= 7.74; df=1; p=0.005). Only 2% said 'no' to giving films certificates compared to 22% of offenders. When asked "why they thought films were given certificates", there was some difference between the two groups although the results did not reach significance. More offenders (44%) than school students (25%) said it was because "younger children may imitate what they see". But more school students (55%) than offenders (35%) said it was

"because films may show scenes that younger children should not see", without a mention of the possibility that they may copy them.

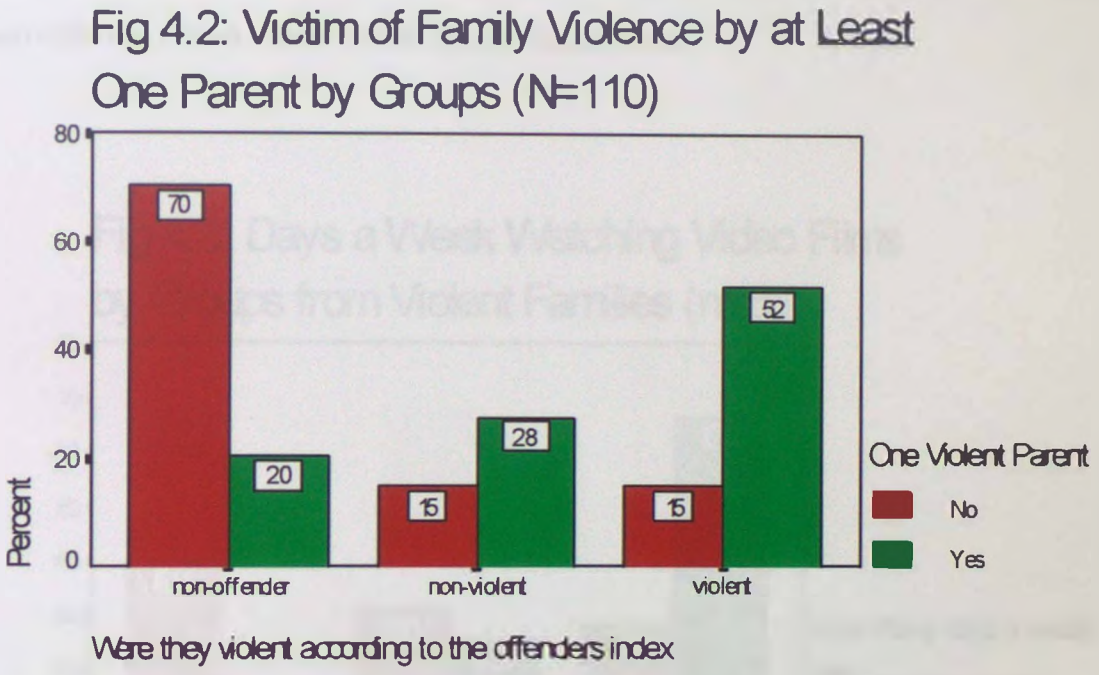
To determine whether the participants actually knew what the current film certificates were, they were asked to name them all. Eighty per cent of school students could correctly name them all, compared to 52% of the offender group.

Table 4.1: Significant Differences between Offenders and Non-Offenders in Viewing Habits and Preferences (N=122) (*Chi-Square Test or Fisher's Exact Test, df=1; p<0.05).

	%Offenders (N=82)	**%Non-Offenders (N=40)**
Television Viewing		
Films on 3 or more days per week	53	28
After 9.00pm Watershed	65	100
Preferred Soap Operas	74	35
Preferred Police Dramas	40	0
Preferred Science Fiction	10	33
Preferred Sports	12	64
Preferred Comedy	11	53
Video Film Viewing		
Two days per week or more	65	20
Five or more films per week	36	5
Watched on Satellite	84	40
Preferred violent films	48	13
Preferred violent character	20	5
Favourite actor plays violent characters	64	25
Film Classification		
No to film classification	22	2
Knew classification system	52	80

4.5.7 Viewing Habits Related to Family Violence

As discussed in the introduction, one of the aims of the study was to look at how family backgrounds and, in particular, violence in the family home, links to offending behaviour and to what young people watch and how they watch it. To determine this, the groups were divided on the basis of whether or not they were subjected to violence by their maternal figure and/or paternal figure and whether they showed violence to either of their parents.

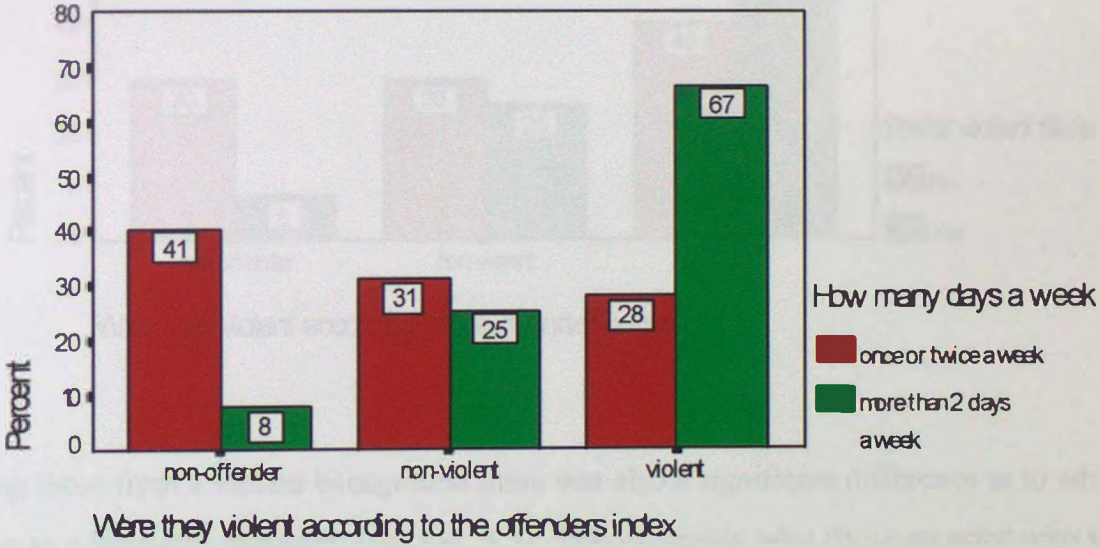


Of those respondents (n=83) who reported to be victims of violence by their mother and/or father; 52% were violent offenders, 28% were non-violent offenders and 20% were non-offenders. For those respondents (n=27) without violent backgrounds; 15% were violent offenders, 15% were non-violent offenders and 70% were non-offenders (see Figure 4.2). Therefore, violent offenders were significantly more likely to report being victims of family violence. (Chi-square = 23.39, df=2, $p<0.0001$).

Controlling for the presence of family violence (ie. where physical aggression towards a family member was reported to have occurred on at least one occasion), the links between offending behaviour and film preference were reanalysed.

For those from a violent family background, significant differences emerged between the three groups in terms of their viewing habits such as the amount of time spent watching films on video (see Fig. 4.3). Thus 67% of people who watched films for more than two days a week were violent offenders, compared to 25% who were non-violent offenders and 8% who were non-offenders (Chi-square = 16.19, df=2, $p<0.001$). There was no such difference between offenders and non-offenders from a non-violent family background.

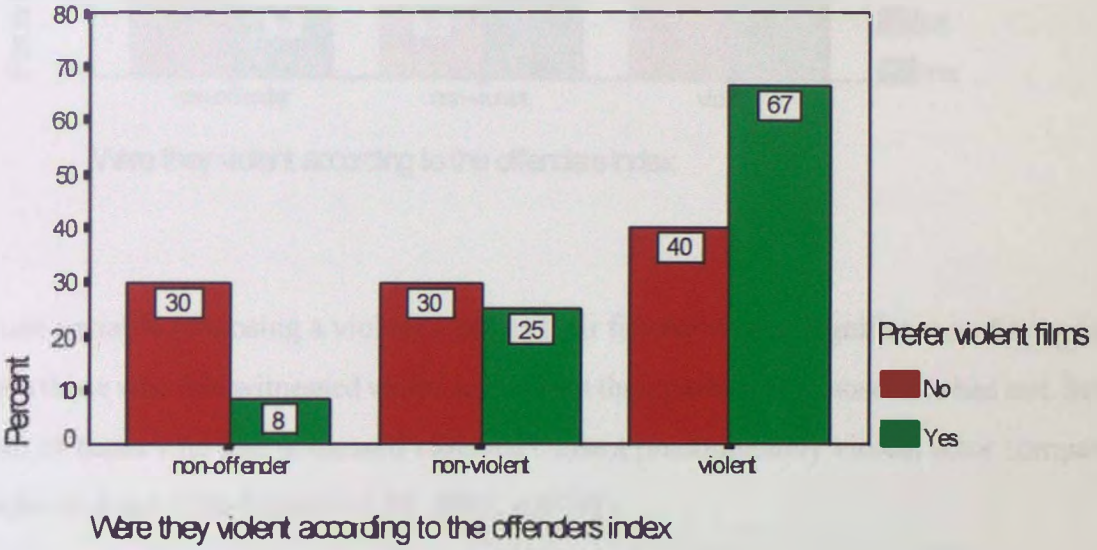
Fig 4.3: Days a Week Watching Video Films by Groups from Violent Families (n=66)



The type of television programme mentioned as their favourite was not associated with whether violence was present in the home. A significant difference emerged between the three groups independent of this (Chi-square=21.35; df=1; $p<0.001$). Of all those who named a police programme as their favourite, 66% were violent offenders and 34% non-violent offenders. No school/college students named a police programme as one of their favourites.

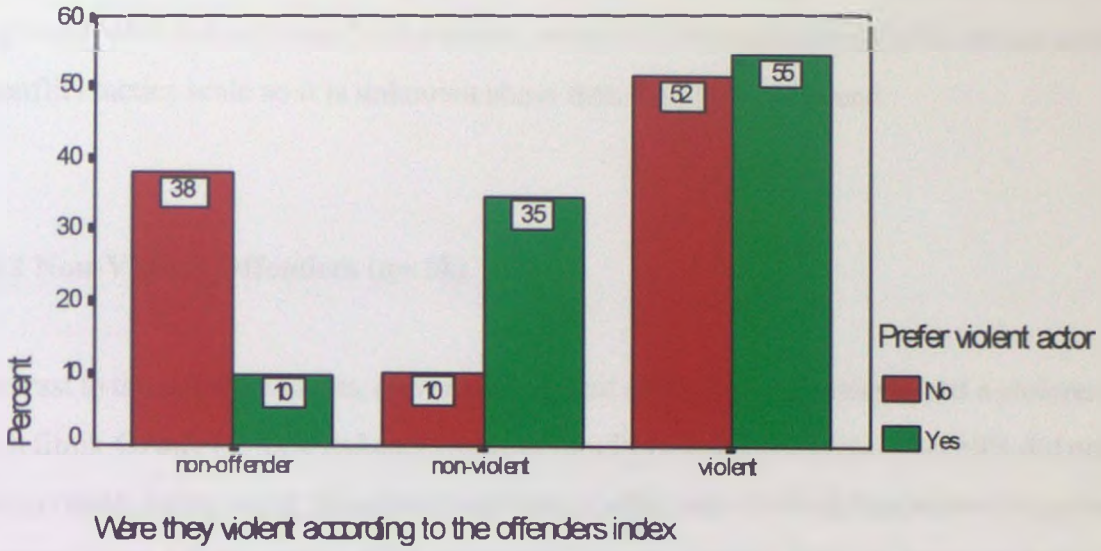
Whether a violent film was mentioned as their favourite type of film was again linked to the problem of family violence and the groups from violent backgrounds showed significant differences (see Fig. 4.4): 67% of people with violent parents who preferred violent films were violent offenders, compared to 25% who were non-violent offenders and 8% who were non-offenders. A similar pattern emerged for those who were violent to their parents in general (minimum Chi-Square=7.46; df=2; p=0.02). No such differences were observed between offenders and non-offenders from non-violent backgrounds.

Fig 4.4: Preference for Violent Films by Groups from Violent Families (n=66)



Among those from a violent background there was also a significant difference as to who was chosen as a favourite character, (see Fig. 4.5): 55% of people who chose an actor who was in predominantly violent roles were violent offenders compared to 35% who were non-violent offenders and 10% who were school/college students. A similar pattern again was found for young people who had been violent to their parents (minimum Chi-Square=7.66; df=2; p=0.02). Again no such differences emerged between the young people from non-violent backgrounds.

Fig 4.5: Preference for Violent Character by Groups from Violent Families (n=66)



Only one variable (choosing a violent actor as their favourite) was significant in distinguishing between those who had witnessed violence between their parents and those who had not. Seventy per cent of those who had witnessed violence chose a predominately violent actor compared to 37% who had not (Chi-Square= 6.39; df=1; $p<0.01$).

4.5.8 Case Analysis of Film Preferences and Family Backgrounds

The above analysis of data has shown that family background was an essential prerequisite for the development of a significant difference in preference for violent film between the three groups. However, a case study analysis was also carried out to extract information from each group (violent offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders) to highlight the relationship between family background and violent film viewing preferences, independent of offending behaviour.

4.5.8.1 Non-Offenders (n=40)

Five non-offenders (12.5%) expressed a preference for violent films, with three of these people (60%) experiencing family violence and 40% not experiencing family violence. Of the 35 people (87.5%) who did not share this preference for violent films, 43% had a violent family background, 46% did not come from a violent home and the remaining 4 (11%) did not complete the conflict tactics scale so it is unknown about their family background.

4.5.8.2 Non-Violent Offenders (n= 28)

In contrast to the school students, eleven non-violent offenders (39%) expressed a preference for violent films. Of this 11, 82% had experience of family violence while the other 18% did not have a violent family background. Seventeen non-violent offenders (61%) did not show this preference for violent films. Of this group, 82% came from a violent home, 12% had non-violent parents and one person (6%) did not answer the conflict tactics scale.

4.5.8.3 Violent Offenders (n=54)

Twenty eight violent offenders (52%) expressed a preference for violent film with 89% of these coming from a violent family background. Only one person (4%) shared this preference for violent films, but did not experience parental violence. The remaining 7% did not complete the conflict tactics scale so it is unknown about their home life. Of the 26 violent offenders (48%) who did not express a preference for violent films, 77% came from a violent family, 11.5% did not come from a violent family and 11.5% did not complete the Conflict Tactics Scale.

Table 4.2: Summary of Case Analysis for Participants who Expressed a Preference for Violent Films (N=42)*

	Violent Offender (n=26)	Non-Violent Offender (n=11)	Non-Offender (n=5)
Family Violence Present	89%	82%	60%
Family Violence Absent	4%	18%	40%

Note:
*** This table does not include percentages for people who did not complete the Conflict Tactics Scale**

These analyses and Table 4.2 indicate that for all three groups, the majority of people who prefer violent films come from violent families. This was more distinctive for both groups of offenders than the non-offenders suggesting that both family background and offending behaviour are necessary preconditions for the development of a significant preference for violent film. However, it is not possible to say that all individuals who come from a violent family will like violent films as participants from all three groups experienced family violence, but did not express a preference for films of a violent nature.

4.6 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The hypothesis proposed that violent young offenders will view video films more often than non-violent offenders and non-offenders, was partially accepted as the results showed that violent young offenders will view video films significantly more often than non-offenders. However, the hypothesis could not be fully accepted as there was no difference between violent and non-violent offenders.

The results also showed that the viewing preferences in terms of television programmes and film types of offenders and non-offenders were significantly distinctive. Although it has to be remembered that the results found, were not independent of family violence. This proved to be of paramount importance in influencing the viewing preferences of the groups.

4.7 DISCUSSION

There is a danger that offenders, in particular, may have wanted to sound 'macho' in front of the female interviewers. This could mean that they might say that they liked to see violence in films and to identify with particular characters because they were violent. However, the impressions of the interviewers were that there was no difference in the way the three groups of participants responded to the interviewers. Among the offenders there appeared to be no overt bragging or exaggeration about violent offences committed or the liking of violent characters in an attempt to look macho. This would indicate that the answers given were representative of what the participants genuinely felt, irrespective of their grouping.

In contrast to Hagell and Newburn's (1994) study, which found no differences between the viewing preferences of school/college students and young offenders, this study has demonstrated that differences do exist. Offenders viewed more video films, satellite and television films, selected police/crime oriented programmes and expressed preferences for violent films more often than non-offenders. Offenders were also more likely to identify with violent role models in the films that they watched, as shown by their choice of favourite actors. However, no differences were found in viewing habits between violent offenders and non-violent offenders.

4.7.1 Amount of Viewing

The results clearly show that offenders, as a whole group, do spend more time watching television and video films than non-offenders in terms of the amount of days spent watching them. There

are a couple of possible reasons for this. As many offenders are unemployed whilst outside the prison environment they may therefore have more time to view screen material than non-offenders who are at school or college for the majority of their week. (It has been assumed that on the basis of the majority of responses, viewing habits have been discussed for the offenders' life outside of a secure environment). Another reason for offenders watching more television is linked to parental and family background which may exert an influence in some way over the amount that is watched. This will be discussed in the section "Viewing habits and family violence" below.

4.7.2 Police Drama Preferences

As the results show, offenders were more likely to name a police drama (with the majority recalling "The Bill") as their favourite type of television programme. By looking at the questionnaires qualitatively, many of the reasons put forward were linked to the offenders' own experiences with the police in real life. This had previously been suggested by Hagell and Newburn (1994) in their study on viewing preferences. The following are some examples given by violent offenders in answer to "Why they liked that particular type of programme?",***"I can identify with it"*** , ***"It's real to my life....trouble with the police"***,***"I like them because they are about crime".*** Not all offenders saw it is true to life with one violent offender saying ***"its farcical".*** However, in the main, the responses show that, although it is a fictional programme being watched, the offenders are referring to their own personal real life experiences and see the programme as a realistic representation which they find interesting to watch.

Rarick, Townsend and Boyd (1973) compared delinquent and non-delinquent adolescents in relation to their perceptions of real life and televised police. In contrast to the above findings, both groups saw the police on television as different to the real life version, however, the delinquents did not see it as any more different than the non-delinquents despite their greater contact with the 'real' version throughout their lives. When asked about their attitude to the police, those who had a favourable attitude to the 'real' police force saw more similarity between the fictional and non-

fictional representations than those who disliked the 'real' police.

4.7.3 Viewing Habits and Family Violence

When the results had been reanalysed taking family violence into account it was found that the presence of violence within the home did influence both the amount of time spent viewing video films and the film preferences. In a similar manner to these results, Heath, Krutschnitt and Ward (1986) showed that high exposure to television in childhood would only differentiate offenders and non-offenders in their study if family violence was also experienced.

An explanation for the former of these could be that parents of offenders who are violent towards them have less control over how much television is watched. Heath, et al. (1986) also found that parents of offenders were less likely to have "television rules", mainly related to the amount of viewing, than parents of non-offenders. Although this was when the individuals were younger, it does indicate how parents of different groups of people can control viewing behaviour.

In an extension of this, Ashbach (1994) describes how impoverished relationships within the family, which can be seen in families where violence is seen as a conflict resolution, can lead to the young person wanting to escape from their 'painful' real life into a fictional world by viewing more television and film material. This can also lead to them fantasising about screen characters who they may wish to be like. Offenders from violent families are more likely to identify favourite actors who are in predominately violent roles (eg. Jean Claude van Damme). One offender said the following about his favourite actor, ***" Jean Claude van Damme has been my idol since I was 10 years old. I want to be that big"***

Ashbach (1994) takes a psychodynamic view about the child's development related to family relationships and how this interacts with their perceptions of screen imagery. This line of explanation will be elaborated on in Chapter 6 with particular reference to the individuals' identification with screen characters.

The final part of this discussion is concerned with the finding that violent offenders from violent family backgrounds were more likely to choose violent films as their favourite type. This may seem unusual as it would appear to be logical that people surrounded by violence in their everyday life would want to distract themselves from violent images. This, however, does not seem the case as Hill (1997) indicates that even people who detest violence (possibly as a result of directly experiencing violence or witnessing violence between others in their home environment) still have a desire to watch fictional violence in films and on television.

Again, various explanations can be suggested including the concept (shown in the last chapter) that children learn to be violent from their parents (Widom, 1989), which leads to them wanting to see violence in films because it is the norm of their life. One violent offender offered this very explanation as to why his preference is for violent films, ***"I was brought up with violence and I'm used to it. I enjoy watching violence".***

Lynn, Hampson and Agahi (1989) in their study of children in Northern Ireland, said that personality traits in an individual which could be produced by nature (genetic) or nurture (family influence), lead to the enjoyment of violence on the screen. These personality traits could be such traits as the stage of moral development or aggressive and empathy levels described in the last chapter, which are also linked to upbringing and parental role models. A model, based on this concept, is shown in the final chapter (Chapter 9) to highlight the interconnection of personality and family background in the preference for violent films and characters.

4.8 SUMMARY

This chapter has given an insight into viewing habits and preferences with perhaps the focal point being the importance of family background. This is shown by the fact that many significant differences between offenders and non-offenders' film and television choices disappear if family violence is not present. What must surely be recognised from this chapter's findings is that in relation to the viewing of film violence, an individual's background must be identified and

considered.

The succeeding chapter moves on from simple television programme and film preferences to the behavioural influences violent material can have on the individual during the actual viewing experience. By incorporating both types of approach, viewing preferences ('uses and gratifications') and behavioural influences, an attempt has been made to be less restrictive than previous research (which usually encompass just one ideology) in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the influence of violent film.

CHAPTER 5: THE BEHAVIOURAL IMPACT OF VIEWING FILM VIOLENCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The review of the literature in Chapter 1 identified that research on the viewing of violent television and film imagery comprised of a vast array of research questions and methods used to answer them. The consensual theme which could be extracted from this collection of available studies, was that researchers wanted to know how the viewer was influenced or affected by what they saw. In order to determine this, individuals' responses to violent screen imagery were measured to discover what happens to an individual after or during the viewing experience.

How a viewer responds to violence on the screen can be measured in a number of ways, although the broadest categorisation is to class responses as physiological, psychological and behavioural. However, these classifications are not mutually exclusive as one type of response can impact on another. For example, emotional thoughts (psychological) can activate actions (behavioural) (Berkowitz, 1993). This chapter will concentrate on the behavioural responses although all three approaches are outlined within this introductory section.

5.1.1 Physiological Approaches

Physiological responses have most commonly been ascertained through the measurement of arousal by galvanic skin responses or blood pressure levels. Bushman and Geen (1990) measured systolic blood pressure levels prior to and after viewing violent and non-violent film and television material. They found that blood pressure decreased during the non-violent "Dallas" episode but increased during the violent film "48 Hours". These types of studies rely on bodily reactions to determine arousal levels to the material being viewed.

However, arousal is not in itself, proof of an individual becoming aggressive after viewing violent films or television (Tannenbaum and Zillmann, 1975). Arousal is a non-specific physiological response to excitement-eliciting stimuli which is not limited to violence but is often defined inappropriately by the content matter of what is being viewed. Therefore, arousal from a violent programme or film may be described as anger (Zillmann, 1979), or arousal to pornographic images may be explained as sexual arousal. However, the actual physiological response (increased systolic blood pressure) will be the same for both violent and sexual images. This confounds most attempts at interpreting the impact of film violence from physiological approaches.

5.1.2 Psychological Approaches

To provide a different level of understanding into how films influence people, psychological responses offer an explanation into the emotions and thoughts of the individual during and after viewing violent film material. This will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, "The Cognitive and Emotional Impact of Viewing Film Violence". As an example, Bushman and Geen (1990) asked people to list thoughts they experienced while viewing a violent scene to compare the number of aggressive thoughts listed immediately after viewing dependent on the amount of violence the viewer watched. They found that aggressive thoughts increased with the level of violence in the video. The authors concluded that people exposed to film violence are more likely to have violent cognitions after viewing although individual differences can modify these responses.

5.1.3 Behavioural Approaches

One of the main focal points of interest in film violence research is whether screen violence makes people act aggressive and the behavioural response to violent imagery is perhaps one of the most researched areas within this field. However, research has been somewhat concentrated

on displays of aggressive behaviour after viewing violent screen material.

Bandura et al.'s (1963) classic Bobo Doll studies demonstrated that violent television could lead to children's play becoming aggressive dependent on perceived efficacy (whether the model watched was rewarded for their violent actions). These studies highlighted that behaviour can in fact be modelled on what is viewed. This is consistent with social learning theory; that children learn by imitating others, including the retention of 40% of these behaviours up to eight months after viewing (Hicks, 1965).

Huesmann's (1982) 'social script' theory suggests that people may become aggressive after watching screen violence as they develop a script of how to behave in social situations, based on what they see. There are four prerequisites, which can also be applied to the social learning and imitation of behaviour, that are essential for social scripting to occur:

- **Attention**- the viewer needs to pay attention to the screen imagery with particular relevance being placed on the violence aspect standing out from other images.

- **Interpretation**- the violence needs to be interpreted appropriately; seen as good and successful (perceived efficacy as shown in Bandura et al.'s (1963) studies).

- **Retention**- the viewer has to rehearse what has been seen in order to retain what has been viewed. If the rehearsal uses more variation than what is strictly seen, then the social script will be more generalised.

- **Activation**- certain cues in the viewer's environment can influence whether a social script and hence the learned behaviours are activated. These can include visual or verbal cues which link the current social situation with the screen images.

Behavioural research however has not been limited to the social learning theory debate. As an extension of the 'cognitive neo-association' theory (discussed in Chapter 1), Berkowitz (1993)

asserts that the 'priming' of aggression is not confined to thoughts and cognitions but impacts on physiological, emotional and motor actions. These motor or muscular movements can activate feelings, for example clenching fists or tensing muscles can create a sensory feedback for hostile thoughts during an emotion-arousing event (Berkowitz, 1993). What is of interest from this theory is the connotation that an individual will be 'primed' to behave or act aggressively during or after viewing violent screen material. Both Berkowitz's (1984) and Huesmann's (1982) theories also have psychological components and are therefore discussed further within the next chapter.

5.1.4 The Ethological Approach

The study into understanding why animals and humans act in certain ways is known generically as ethology (Sluckin and Herbert, 1986). This ethological approach to behaviour is concentrated around direct observation as a means to identify behavioural patterns. This has meant a drift from psychometric measurements and often a replacement of the artificiality of a laboratory setting to a more naturalistic observational setting (eg. the home) (Browne, 1986). This kind of approach can however be used in conjunction with other methods such as interviews and psychometric techniques to create a multi-dimensional procedure for investigating the influence of screen violence on the audience. "A purely behavioural approach is unlikely to be adequate...other techniques are often necessary to elucidate the meaning of behaviour" (Browne, 1986; p.363). This need for cross -validation of different sources of data is undertaken in this research study through the use of a diverse range of data collection techniques; one of which is the direct observation of the behavioural responses to violent screen imagery.

Social learning and 'priming' are two theoretical perspectives which give two distinct reasons for the same act of human behaviour (aggression). Behaviour patterns however, can be thought of as 'physical characteristics' which describe the actual bodily movements made or as 'consequences' which describe an activity which produces a result (Hinde, 1974). The majority of work on behavioural responses to film violence has generally focussed on the latter, aggressive

behaviour is that which produces consequences; harm to another (hitting the Bobo Doll). However, Gunter (1985) maintains that facial expressions can be directly observed to provide a measure of emotional reactions to a violent film. Hill (1997) shows how other bodily movements and actions are used by the viewer to heighten excitement or indeed can be seen to act as protection factors to violent screen imagery.

5.2 AIMS OF CHAPTER

This chapter therefore describes the observational study of participants' behaviour, in terms of their 'physical characteristics', whilst viewing a violent video. The aim of using this level of analysis of behavioural patterns is to enable further understanding into how viewers and more specifically how offenders and non-offenders, respond to violent screen material at the actual time of viewing.

5.3 HYPOTHESES

Based on the results from Chapter 4 that violent offenders prefer violent films and like seeing screen violence, the hypotheses for this chapter are:

5.3.1 General Hypotheses

1) Violent offenders will show more behaviours depicting 'interest' while viewing an entire video film containing violence than a) non-violent offenders and b) non-offenders.

2) Violent offenders will show more behaviours depicting 'approval' while viewing an entire video film containing violence than a) non-violent offenders and b) non-offenders.

5.3.2 Specific Hypotheses

3) Violent offenders will show more behaviours depicting 'interest' towards scenes containing; a) violent acts, b) antisocial acts, c) threatening acts and d) horror than non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

4) There will be no significant differences in 'interest' for scenes containing; a) emotional images, b) sexual images, c) drugs, d) comedy and e) storyline between the three groups.

5) Violent offenders will show more behaviours depicting 'approval' towards scenes containing; a) violent acts, b) antisocial acts, c) threatening acts and d) horror than non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

6) There will be no significant differences in 'approval' for scenes containing; a) emotional images, b) sexual images, c) drugs, d) comedy and e) storyline between the three groups.

7) Specific scenes within each film that show significant differences in 'interest' and 'approval' behaviours between the offender groups combined and non-offenders will contain either a) violent acts, b) antisocial acts, c) threatening acts or d) horror.

8) There will be a significant association between the responses to the initial film interview and measures of 'interest' and 'approval' by direct observation for all participants.

5.4 METHOD

5.4.1 Sample

In total, 122 participants took part in the study. However, due to computer errors, either at the time of observation or at the time of data retrieval, data was corrupted from 14 participants (11%) and these individuals were unable to be used in the analyses. Therefore, the following study is based on a sample of 44 violent offenders, 26 non-violent offenders and 38 non-offenders.

5.4.2 Observational Procedures

Two participants were asked to sit in the same room and to act as naturally as possible, they were told they could talk and behave anyway they wanted with the only stipulations being that they had to watch the film and if they started to stand up and walk about then the video would be stopped. If they elicited any threatening behaviour to the other participant or to the observer then the video would also be stopped and assistance called if necessary. The observer and the two participants were the only occupants of the room at the time of observation.

Once the participants were settled, the observer set the 'Ethogram' event recorder software package (Browne and Madeley, 1985) on the lap-top micro-computer. Some selections for the package had to be chosen immediately prior to the observation rather than being pre-programmed; these related to how the behaviours would be recorded. The Ethogram package is designed to observe single subjects, multiple subjects or interaction. As two participants were being observed at once, the interaction mode was selected as this could provide information on how two viewers interact and communicate with each other when watching a video. This provided a more realistic observation, as most viewers will interact with each other to some extent while watching a video film.

The next selection made, was to observe the behaviours concurrently rather than consecutively. This enabled the observer to enter a number of behaviours related to one participant before entering an object or another participant.

Once the sample identification name and number had been typed in, the observation begun. The video was put on and the "start key" on the computer was hit at exactly the right time at a pre-arranged point right at the start of the video film. The importance of this was paramount as the timing of the observation needed to be directly linked to the timing of the video in order to analyse the behaviours scene by scene. During the film viewing, all movements, behaviours and vocalisations were recorded on to the computer together with their time of entry.

At the end of the observation the "end key" was again pressed at a pre-arranged point so that the timing would still be accurate. The participants were then sent back to separate rooms for post-film interviews.

In the event of a participant requesting the video to be stopped, a "time-out" facility existed in the software package. The observer made sure that the video was stopped straight away or if this was not possible then it was rewound to the point where the time-out was requested. Once the video went back on, the observations could be resumed still keeping in time with the video film for analysis.

5.4.3 Materials and the Behaviour Catalogue

The computer used for the direct observation was an Epson HX20 portable microcomputer and the observations were recorded using the Ethogram software package developed by K. Browne and R. Madeley (1985). This package enables the computer to become an 'event recorder' for directly observing behaviour of single or multiple participants or the interactions between these participants (Browne and Madeley, 1985).

The observation utilises the current 'library' of expected behaviours which must be created prior to the actual observation process. Therefore, the computer was pre-programmed with 35 different behaviours, 10 different 'subjects' and one 'error' key. Each single letter or number key on the computer keyboard, represented a behaviour in the case of the former and a subject in the case of the latter (e.g. 'Q' = Looks towards television; '1' = Young Person One). The computer allowed a 10 character code for the subject library and a 4 character code for the behaviour library (see Table 5.1). The operational definitions for the behaviours are listed in Appendix IV, which shows a more detailed explanation of what constitutes each behaviour scored.

Table 5.1: Subject and Behaviour Libraries

SUBJECT LIBRARY

1 Participant One
2 Participant Two
3 Participants
4 Observer
5 Keyworker
6 Staff
7 Researcher 1
8 Researcher 2
9 Other
10 Object

BEHAVIOUR LIBRARY

Visual Behaviours

Q LOTV Looks at Television

W LOKR Looks around room/ away from television

E LOKT Looks Towards Person

R STEY Shuts eyes for period of time

Facial Expressions

T SMIL Smiles

Y FRWN Frowns (Sad or questioning)

U GRIM Grimaces

I NEUT Neutral Facial Expression

Non-verbal Behaviours and Gestures

= GTOP Gestures towards person

[GTTV Gestures towards television

] SHAK Shakes Head

\ NODS Nods Head

Posture

A EDGE Sits on edge of seat/ Rises from seat in excitement

S BACK Sits back in seat (not on edge)

D FARM Folds Arms

F AUOB Arms unfolded on body

G RHOA Rests head on hands/arms

H CHPN Changes position/ Fidgets

Vocalisations

Z	SILE	Silence
X	LAUG	Laughs
C	SING	Sings/ Follows music
V	YAWN	Yawns
B	COGH	Coughs
N	SWER	Swears
J	EXCL	Exclaims
K	COMP	Makes a comment about the film (positively)
L	COMN	Makes a comment about the film (negatively)
M	TLKP	Talks (not related to the film- positively)
,	TLKN	Talks (not related to the film- negatively)
.	REPP	Replies to comment (positively)
/	REPN	Replies to comment (negatively)

Behaviours

O	HNDS	Fiddles with hands
P	HNST	Hands Still
@	HTOF	Puts hands to face
;	HITS	Hits
:	EROR	Error

5.4.4 Reliability Measures

Prior to the actual observations, the intra-rater reliability of the observation was measured. Two male volunteers were videoed while they watched a film. The video-tape recording was then observed on two different occasions and the computer print-outs of observed behaviours were compared across sessions. From this data, the intra-rater reliability was statistically calculated.

The intra-rater reliability was essential to calculate as it identified whether the rater was consistent in their ratings over time. The recorded video-tape of the two volunteers, showed exactly the same observational scene each time, which made it an extremely accurate way of assessing the intra-rater reliability.

To assess the intra-rater reliability, two transition matrices were calculated using the two data sets and a matrix of z-ratios was then computed, which reflected the differences between the two transition matrices. This matrix showed no significant difference between the sequential structure of the observed behaviours (the order in which the behaviours were scored) at Time 1 and Time 2.

The percentage agreement of observed behaviours between Time 1 and Time 2 is 83.77%. This means that for that percentage of time, the observer is scoring the same behaviours on both occasions. The Spearman correlation coefficient calculated, was +0.979. This exceeded the table value corresponding to the relevant number of different behaviours observed (n=19), therefore, showing a highly significant correlation between the two sets of rankings (at the p=0.001 level).

Both of these results showed a high agreement between the two sets of behaviours scored, indicating that the observer was scoring behaviours with high, but not total reliability. Obviously, the figures did show there is a small amount of inconsistency; to be fully reliable the percentage agreement would need to be 100%. This is, of course extremely difficult to achieve as factors like tiredness and momentary distractedness can effect how accurately the observer scores the behaviours on each occasion. One way to improve reliability is to have a number of 'practise-runs'.

5.4.5 Categorisation of Behaviours for Analysis

Before the behavioural data could be analysed it was necessary to collate the behaviours observed for each individual into different categories representing two different aspects of viewing

behaviour (**"approval"** and **"interest"**) which could be assessed and compared across the three groups. These viewing categories were chosen because they identified, but still differentiated two important factors in how people respond behaviourally to violent screen imagery. As noted in the introduction to this chapter is it fundamental to see what parts of a violent film, people attend to or are interested in.

It is also advantageous to determine what elements of the film (with particular reference to the violence shown) appear to cause approval behaviours to be displayed and whether this differentiates the offender groups from the non-offender group. This may therefore highlight aspects of the film which may have more influence than others due to being attended to more and being approved of. In terms of the social learning and scripting theories, where it is important that screen violence is interpreted appropriately for it to be retained, approval or disapproval behaviours can distinguish when viewers see violence as positive and successful and when they view it as unsuccessful (making it unlikely to be copied or preserved as a behavioural script).

The two amalgamated categories were both represented by a five point scale which described varying levels of the specific behaviour with the converse behaviours placed at each end of the scale. For example, the "approval" scale was as follows: **Strongly Approve (5), Approve (4), Neutral (3), Disapprove (2), Strongly Disapprove (1),** with the "Interest" scale following the same 5 point pattern from **Strongly Interested (5), Interested (4), Neutral (3), Interested (2), Strongly Disinterested (1).**

The separate observed behaviours were placed under the relevant heading by deciding what kind of viewing behaviour they represented.

Table 5.2: Amalgamated Behavioural Categories for Approval Viewing Behaviours

Strongly Approve	Approve	Neutral	Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove
Laugh Nods head Swear (with approval behaviours)	Smile Comment Positively	Neutral Cough	Frown Comment Negatively	Grimace Shake Head Swear (with disapproval behaviours)

Table 5.3: Amalgamated Behavioural Categories for Interested Viewing Behaviours:

Strongly Interested	Interested	Neutral	Disinterested	Strongly Disinterested
Exclaim Gesture (at TV)	Sit on edge Of seat Look at other person Reply to other person	Look at TV Sit back Folds arms Unfolds arms Silence Rest head on arms Hands to face Hands are still	Look away Fidget Reply (not about film) Fidgets hands	Yawn Talks (not about film) Shuts eyes Gestures to other person

5.4.6 Analysis of the Video Films

The films were watched on a separate occasion from the observations to ascertain which particular scenes were examined for the study (see Table 5.4). For each separate video, a number of scenes were identified and the timings of these scenes were noted along with a brief outline of what was contained in them. This allowed the outputs from the observations to be marked where these scenes appeared. It was then possible to see what behaviours had been observed for these marked periods. (For scene contents of each film, see Appendix V).

The data was then collated into nine different types of scene which occurred throughout the films. The responses were then added up to obtain an average score for both approval and interest behaviours for each of the different types of scene.

Table 5.4: Scene Types for Coding Behavioural Responses:

1 Violent
2 Antisocial
3 Threat
4 Horror
5 Emotional
6 Sexual
7 Drugs
8 Comedy
9 Storyline

5.4.7 Assessing the Viewing Behaviour

People were given a score on the "approval" and "interest" scales for each of the identified scenes. The scores were computed by calculating which of the behaviours occurred most frequently in the time that a particular scene was being viewed. If people showed both approval and disapproval behaviours or both interested and disinterested behaviours then they were scored for the most frequent of these. If they scored equal numbers of both then they were given a neutral score. People were categorised neutral if they changed position just once or looked away once as this was not seen as a sign of disinterest if it only occurred once in a particular scene.

The magnitude of the score for the behaviour was determined either by the type of behaviour shown or by the frequency of the displayed behaviours, for example, laughing would be scored

as strongly approval (5), but if the person smiled several times this would also be scored as a 5 (one smile would be scored as 4). If the person showed mainly strongly approval behaviours, but also showed a disapproval behaviour at some point during the scene, then they would score a 4 for approval rather than a 5 for strongly approval.

In the same way that it was important to assess the intra-rater reliability of the observation, it was also essential to assess the categorisation of behaviours into the two viewing behavioural classifications and the score given on the scale for these behaviours. In order to achieve this, ten participants were coded for their behaviours and then re-coded. A percentage agreement between the corresponding pairs of scores was calculated for approval (95%) and for interest (86%). These percentages showed a high agreement between the two sets of scores which indicated that the reliability for coding the behaviours by the observer was high.

5.4.8 Treatment of Data

For comparisons across all three groups, ANOVA's were used. T-Tests were carried out for comparisons between offenders and non-offenders or between violent and non-violent offenders. As the behaviours were calculated as a score based around the scales rather than used as ordinal data, parametric tests were used for the analyses.

In this description of the results, where no significant differences were found across the three groups (violent offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders) in the ANOVA comparisons, the two offender groups were collapsed into one offender group. This group was then compared by means of a t-test against the non-offender group.

The broadest analyses undertaken was to average general approval and interest behaviours for the whole film and compare these across the three groups. The data was then collated into the nine different types of scene (Violent, Antisocial, Threat, Horror, Emotional, Sexual, Drugs, Comedy and Storyline) which occurred throughout the films. The responses were added up to obtain an

average score for both approval and interest behaviours for each of the different types of scene.

All tests of significance were carried out at a two-tail level despite the fact that some of the hypotheses were directional.

5.5 RESULTS

5.5.1 General Interest (Table 5.5)

An analysis comparing interest behaviours averaged over the film as a whole, showed that a significant difference existed between the three groups (ANOVA, F=5.33; df=2; p=0.006). Further analyses by t-tests highlighted that the evident differences were between non-offenders and violent offenders (t-test, t=-3.05; df=80; p=0.003) and non-offenders and non-violent offenders (t-test, t=-2.47; df=62; p=0.016). However, there were no such differences between the two offender groups.

5.5.2 General Approval (Table 5.5)

A significant difference was found by the ANOVA analysis for approval behaviours averaged over the film as a whole (ANOVA, F=4.58; df=2; p=0.012). In contrast to the above findings for general interest behaviours, there was only a significant difference in overall approval between non-offenders and violent offenders (t-test, t=-2.99; df=79; p=0.004). There was no difference between non-offenders and non-violent offenders and in the same way as above, there was no difference between the two offender groups.

Table 5.5: Average Scores for General Interest and Approval Behaviours (N=108)

	Violent Offender (n=44)	Non-Violent Offenders (n=26)	Non-Offenders (n=38)
Interest	2.62	2.61	2.35**
Approval	3.34	3.25	3.09*

Note: ANOVA analysis
* $p<0.05$
** $p<0.01$

5.5.3 Interest and Approval Related to Type of Scene Compared Across the Three Groups

An analysis of results for the nine different scene categories was carried out between the three groups. Table 5.6 presents the findings for these analyses.

5.5.3.1 Violent Scenes

Table 5.6 shows that the ANOVA analysis for interest in violent scenes demonstrated a significant difference between the three groups (ANOVA, F=4.95; df=2; p=0.008). More detailed comparisons by t-tests showed that differences existed between non-offenders and violent offenders (t-test, t=-3.01; df=80; p=0.004) and non-offenders and non-violent offenders (t-test, t=-2.39; df=62; p=0.02). There was no difference between violent offenders and non-violent offenders. However, the means for all groups (2.51 for violent offenders, 2.47 for non-violent offenders and 2.18 for non-offenders) were below neutral on the interest scale which indicated that all groups exhibited medium to low levels of interest in the violence as a whole.

Unlike the above comparison, the ANOVA analysis across the three groups was not significant for approval behaviours towards violent scenes.

5.5.3.2 Antisocial Scenes

There were no significant differences between the three groups (see Table 5.6) related to their interest behaviours exhibited towards the antisocial scenes in the film.

However, there was a significant difference across the three groups for approval in antisocial scenes (ANOVA, F=3.22; df=2; p=0.05), although further analysis of the means (violent offenders= 3.20; non-violent offenders = 3.58 and non-offenders = 3.10) by t-tests did not reach significance for any of the comparisons.

5.5.3.3 Threat Scenes

Analysis by ANOVA for interest in scenes pertaining some form of threat did not produce significant differences between the three groups.

In contrast, a significant difference was shown when the three groups were compared for their approval of threatening scenes (ANOVA, F=3.49; df=2; p=0.035). Analyses by t-tests highlighted that the only significant distinction occurred between non-offenders and violent offenders (t-test, t=-2.87; df=58.26; p=0.006). Although, all non-offenders, non-violent offenders and violent offenders showed approval behaviours (means of 3.06, 3,17 and 3.31 respectively), with the violent offenders showing the highest scores, no significant differences were evident between the two offender groups.

5.5.3.4 Horror Scenes

A trend was apparent in the comparison of the three groups for interest towards horror scenes (ANOVA, F=2.92; df=2; p=0.06) The offenders scored higher than neutral (means of 3.15 for violent offenders and 3.23 for non-violent offenders) indicating that they displayed interested

behaviours. This was in contrast to the non-offenders who showed disinterest (2.75) in scenes of a horrific nature.

There were no significant differences between the three groups in relation to their approval of horror scenes within the film viewed.

5.5.3.5 Emotional Scenes

There were no significant differences between the three groups either in their interest or approval behaviours for scenes categorised as emotional.

5.5.3.6 Sexual Scenes

Scenes containing sexual imagery were only evident in the Cert. 18 films, therefore only the older age group (aged 18 to 21 years) was compared in relation to scenes of this nature.

There was no significant difference across the three groups in terms of exhibiting behaviours depicting interest towards sexual images.

There was a significant difference across the three groups in the ANOVA analysis for approval to sexual scenes (ANOVA, F=3.66; df=2; p=0.03). Non-offenders significantly differed from non-violent offenders with the non-violent offenders displaying approval behaviours (3.58) while the non-offenders displayed disapproval behaviours (2.93, t-test, t=-2.52; df=16.23; p=0.023). There was no significant difference between non-offenders and violent offenders or between non-violent offenders and violent offenders.

5.5.3.7 Drug Scenes

Scenes containing images of drug use were again only featured in the Cert. 18 films so analysis was only undertaken on the older age group (aged 18 to 21 years) for this scene type.

Analyses of interest in drug scenes, did not produce significant results across the three groups within this older age group.

In contrast to this comparison of interest, the analysis of approval towards these scenes showed a significant difference between the three groups (ANOVA, F=4.61; df=2; p=0.018). The non-offenders scored significantly differently from the violent offenders with violent offenders showing more approving behaviours (3.38) than non-offenders (3.08) towards scenes containing images of drugs (t-test, t=-2.08; df=18.12; p=0.05). Violent offenders also showed more approving behaviours than non-violent offenders for drug scenes, with the non-violent offenders scoring below neutral (2.83), indicating disapproval for this type of scene (t-test, t=-2.41; df=18; p=0.027). There were no significant differences between non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

5.5.3.8 Comedy Scenes

The analysis of interest and approval behaviours towards comedy scenes did not reveal any significant differences between the three groups.

5.5.3.9 Storyline Scenes

No differences were evident between the three groups when they were compared for the interest displayed towards storyline scenes. Similarly to this analysis, no significant difference was found when the three groups were compared by ANOVA analysis for behaviours depicting approval of storyline scenes.

Table 5.6: Differences in Interest and Approval Behaviours for Scene Types across the Three Groups (N=108)

Mean Scores for Scene Types	Violent Offender (n=44)	Non-Violent Offender (n=26)	Non-Offender (n=38)
INTEREST			
Violent	2.51	2.47	2.18***
Antisocial	3.19	3.58	3.10
Threat	2.72	2.62	2.42
Horror	3.15	3.23	2.75*
Emotional	2.64	2.66	2.45
Sexual	2.79	3.03	2.62#
Drugs	2.68	2.94	2.61#
Comedy	2.83	2.81	2.81
Storyline	2.66	2.51	2.42
APPROVAL			
Violent	3.38	3.26	3.14
Antisocial	3.20	3.58	3.10**
Threat	3.31	3.17	3.06**
Horror	2.88	2.75	2.58
Emotional	3.17	3.22	3.00
Sexual	3.20	3.58	2.93**#
Drugs	3.38	2.83	3.08**#
Comedy	3.54	3.57	3.25
Storyline	3.64	3.23	3.40

Note: ANOVA analysis
*** Trend p=0.06**
**** p<0.05**
***** p<0.01**
 # Analysis only for 18 to 21 year age group

5.5.4 Interest and Approval Related to Type of Scene Compared Between Offenders and Non-Offenders

As the majority of cases, held no significant differences between non-violent offenders and

violent offenders, these two groups were collapsed into one offender group and compared with non-offenders. Not surprisingly, the factors which produced significant differences in the former ANOVA comparisons, interest in violent scenes and approval in scenes containing threat and sexual images were also significant in the dichotomous comparison between offenders and non-offenders. However, the exceptions were approval of drug scenes and antisocial scenes where the significance disappeared or was reduced to a trend in this second comparison. In relation to the drug scenes, this could be due to the significant difference evident between the two offender groups which did not occur in any other comparisons across the different scene types.

In addition to the above significances, the offender and non-offender comparison produced distinctions for the following scenes:

- Interest in threat scenes
- Interest in horror scenes (previously a trend)
- Approval of violent scenes (trend)
- Approval of emotional scenes

As Table 5.7 shows offenders exhibited more interested behaviours in threat scenes (t-test, t=-2.14; df=86; p=0.035) and horror scenes (t-test, t=-2.40; df=74; p=0.019) than non-offenders. The offenders also showed more approval behaviours for emotional scenes than non-offenders (T-test, t=-2.16; df=41.63; p=0.036). For the latter two cases, the offenders scored higher than neutral for the respective behaviours indicating that they displayed approval for emotional scenes or interest in horror scenes. This was in contrast to the non-offenders who showed disapproval for emotional scenes and disinterest in horror scenes.

However, the offenders' mean interest score for threatening scenes was lower then neutral indicating disinterested behaviour. This shows that although they were more interested in threatening scenes than non-offenders, they only showed a moderate interest in these types of scenes. There was a trend towards offenders showing more approval behaviours for violent scenes than the non-offenders, but this just missed being significant at the 0.05 level (t-test, t=-1.92;

df=106; p=0.057).

Table 5.7: Differences in Interest and Approval Behaviours for Scene Types between Offenders and Non-Offenders (N=108)

Mean Scores	Offenders (n=70)	Non-Offenders (n=38)
INTEREST		
Violent	2.49	2.18***
Antisocial	2.82	2.58
Threat	2.68	2.42**
Horror	3.18	2.75**
Emotional	2.65	2.45
Sexual	2.89	2.62#
Drugs	2.76	2.61#
Comedy	2.82	2.81
Storyline	2.61	2.42
APPROVAL		
Violent	3.23	3.14*
Antisocial	3.35	3.10
Threat	3.26	3.06***
Horror	3.18	3.10
Emotional	3.18	2.99**
Sexual	3.36	2.93**#
Drugs	3.22	3.08#
Comedy	3.55	3.25
Storyline	3.49	3.40

Note: T-Test Analysis
*** p=0.06 (Trend)**
**** p<0.05**
*****p<0.01**
 # Analysis only for 18 to 21 year age group

5.5.5 Individual Film Comparisons Between Offenders and Non-Offenders

To allow an even more detailed comparison of what particular scenes (in chronological order) produced significant differences between offenders and non-offenders, the individual films were looked at scene by scene by means of a T-test to compare non-offenders with offender groups combined. The small samples watching each film did not allow more sophisticated analyses.

5.5.5.1 "Project Shadowchaser" (Cert 15)

For the majority of scenes, there were no significant differences in either type of viewing behaviour between offenders and non-offenders. However, two scenes, one violent scene 16 (where three characters were pointing guns at each other) and one storyline scene 5 (where the crew enter the other ship and try to find what is happening) produced significant differences between the interest behaviours displayed by offenders than non-offenders (t-test, t=-2.59; df=18; p=0.018 and t=-2.61; df=18; p=0.018 respectively). Although there was a significant difference, the groups showed only moderate to low interest in what they were viewing (both mean scores were below neutral), with the offenders showing more interest than the non-offenders. (See Table 5.8).

Two trends also appeared, although they did not reach significance. These were in relation to interest in a horror scene (t-test, t=-2.00; df=18; p=0.06) and approval of a violent scene (t-test, t=-1.97; df=18; p=0.06). Offenders were more likely to show interested behaviours to a particular horror scene 14, where a man's head is blown up, than non-offenders who in fact showed disinterested behaviours. In a similar manner, offenders were more likely to show approval behaviours to a violent scene 19, which involved a final fight between the remaining crew members and the android, but the non-offenders showed disapproval behaviours.

5.5.5.2 "Surviving the Game" (Cert. 15)

Again only two scenes in this film, one threatening and one violent, significantly distinguished the viewing behaviours of offenders and non-offenders. For the threatening scene 2, which contained an image of a gun being found, offenders displayed more approval behaviours than non-offenders (t-test, t=-2.351; df=11; p=0.039). The mean scores for interest (Table 5.8) in the violent scene 7 was moderate to low (where a gun was pointed at someone's head) and indicated that on this occasion non-offenders maintained interested more than offenders (t-test, t=2.10; df=16; p=0.05).

5.5.5.3 "No Surrender" (Cert 15)

Approval for an antisocial scene 1, when motorbikes were being stolen, was significantly higher for offenders than non-offenders (t-test, t=-2.57; df=17.87; p=0.019). Offenders also showed more approval behaviours for an emotional scene 17, when a young boy is caught sneaking back into the house by his mother and is told off because she was worried about him, than non-offenders (t-test, t=-2.12; df=13; p=0.05). However, like the film above, non-offenders maintained more interest in a particular violent scene 7 (containing a fight in a school canteen) than the offenders (t-test, t=2.46; df=13; p=0.029), although neither group's mean score was above neutral indicating moderate to low interest in the scene. (See Table 5.8 below).

Table 5.8: Significant Differences Between Offenders and Non-Offenders (aged 15 to 17 years) for Individual Scenes in the Certificate 15 Films (N=58)

Mean Scores	Offender	Non-Offender
PROJECT SHADOWCHASER	**(n=14)**	**(n=6)**
Scene 5- Storyline (Interest)	2.29	1.33**
Scene 14- Horror (Interest)	3.57	2.83*
Scene 16-Violent (Interest)	2.71	1.67**
Scene 19- Violent (Approval)	3.64	2.67*
SURVIVING THE GAME	**(n=12)**	**(n=6)**
Scene 2- Threatening (Approval)	3.67	3.00**
Scene 7- Violent (Interest)	2.42	3.00**#
NO SURRENDER	**(n=14)**	**(n=6)**
Scene 1-Antisocial (Approval)	3.93	3.17**
Scene 7- Violent (Interest)	2.50	3.00**#
Scene 17- Emotional (Approval)	3.43	3.00**

Note: T-test analysis
*** p=0.06 (trend)**
****p<0.05**
#= Against Hypothesis

5.5.5.4 "Love and a 45" (Cert. 18)

In this film, offenders showed approval behaviours for a violent scene 10 (where a man used a tattoo gun as a weapon), which significantly distinguished them from the non-offenders who showed disapproval behaviours for the same scene (t-test, t=-3.33; df=14; p=0.005). The non-offenders, despite showing no great interest in a sexual scene 8, (which depicted a topless girl dancing in a strip club), showed significantly more interest behaviours than offenders in the same scene (t-test, t=2.24; df=9; p=0.05). The non-offenders also showed more interest in a threatening scene 16, which involved a close up of a gun, than offenders (t-test, t=2.25; df=9; p=0.05). (See Table 5.9).

5.5.5.5 "ID" (Cert.18)

For all of the four scenes in this film, which showed significant differences between offenders and non-offenders, the offenders showed more approving behaviours or more interest behaviours than the non-offenders. For the three scenes where approval behaviours distinguished between the two groups, the offenders showed actual approving behaviour (mean score higher than neutral), unlike the non-offenders who showed disapproval behaviours. Two of these scenes 7 and 13 were violent, with one of these containing a rape scene between the lead character and his girlfriend (t-test, t=-2.48; df=14; p=0.027) and the other violence between the undercover policeman lead character and a woman, only this time it was the woman being violent towards the man (t-test, t=-2.48; df=14; p=0.026). The emotional scene 16 which differentiated the two groups, showed the lead character and his girlfriend having an argument. Offenders were significantly more approving of this scene than non-offenders (t-test, t=-2.80; df=13.74; p=0.014). (See Table 5.9)

The scene where interest behaviours were significantly different between the two groups (t-test, t=-2.22; df=14; p=0.044), was a violent scene 19 (involving a gang fight between rival football fans), but neither group actually showed great interest (both mean scores were below neutral), with offenders showing more interest behaviours than the non-offenders. A trend, which failed to reach significance, showed that offenders exhibited more approval behaviours than non-offenders (mean score was neutral) in response to a violent scene 22 (another gang fight which featured smashing a coach as well) (t-test, t=-2.06; df=14; p=0.058)

5.5.5.6 "Last Gasp" (Cert.18)

This film had seven scenes which significantly differentiated offenders from non-offenders. For all these scenes, offenders scored higher on either of the approval or interest scales than non-offenders, although for some scenes, both groups' mean scores were below neutral on the relevant scales. Two scenes 2 and 19, one horror (containing a dismembered body) and one

threatening, where the lead female character was about to kill her friend (t-test, t=-2.08; df=16; p=0.05 and t=-2.25; df=9; p=0.05 respectively) showed that offenders expressed more approval than the non-offenders, with the offenders' mean score being above neutral (approving), but the non-offenders either showed disapproval or neutral behaviours for both. (See Table 5.9)

The other five scenes showed a significance difference in the interested behaviours of the two groups. For two threatening scenes 13 (showing a weapon) and 19, which involved the lead character getting ready to kill her friend (t-test, t=-2.60; df=16; p=0.019 and t=-4.52; df=16; p=0.00) and one violent scene 4, which contained a close-up of a stabbing, (t-test, t=-2.15; df=13.44; p=0.05), the offenders showed interested behaviours while the non-offenders expressed disinterest in what they were viewing. For the other two violent scenes 6 and 18 (a fight between two men with the use of a mechanical drill and a fight between a man and a woman), both groups displayed moderate to low interest behaviours, although the offenders were significantly more interested than the non-offenders (t-test, t=-2.69; df=16; p=0.016 and t=-2.36; df=11.72; p=0.037).

Table 5.9: Significant Differences Between Offenders and Non-Offenders (aged 18 to 21 years) for Individual Scenes in the Certificate 18 Films (N=50)

Mean Scores	Offender	Non-Offender
LOVE AND A 45	**(n=10)**	**(n=6)**
Scene 8- Sexual (Interest)	2.50	3.00**#
Scene 10-Violent (Approval)	4.10	2.00***
Scene 16- Threatening (Interest)	2.40	3.00**#
ID	**(n=10)**	**(n=6)**
Scene 7-Violent (Approval)	4.10	3.00*
Scene 13- Violent (Approval)	3.40	2.33**
Scene 16- Emotional (Approval)	3.70	2.83**
Scene 19-Violent (Interest)	2.90	1.67**
Scene 22- Violent (Approval)	3.30	2.17**
LAST GASP	**(n=10)**	**(n=8)**
Scene 2- Horror (Approval)	3.60	2.75**
Scene 4- Violent (Interest)	3.50	2.75**
Scene 6- Violent (Interest)	2.80	2.13**
Scene 13- Threatening (Interest)	3.10	1.88**
Scene 18- Violent (Interest)	2.70	1.50**
Scene 19- Threatening (Approval)	3.60	3.00**
Scene 19- Threatening (Interest)	3.10	1.50***

Note: T- Test analysis
*** p=0.06 (Trend)**
**** p<0.05**
*****p<0.005**
 # =Against Hypothesis

5.5.6 Cross-Validation of Interviews and Behavioural Observation

In the introduction to this chapter, it was recognised that a multi-dimensional approach to collecting data allowed a cross-validation to be carried out by analysing together the answers from several questions in the film questionnaires with the behavioural observation data. In this study, it was assessed by t-tests, with dichotomous questionnaire responses representing the independent

variables and the approval and interest scores on the behavioural observation as the dependent variables.

Table 5.10: Results from Cross-Validation of Film Interview Responses and Behavioural Observations of Viewing for all Groups (N=108).

Question	Yes	No	Approval Or Interest
Watch film again?	(n=69)	(n=39)	
	3.28	3.14	Approval
	2.64	2.32	Interest***
Found Part in Film Exciting?	(n=94)	(n=14)	
	3.24	3.19	Approval
	2.55	2.30	Interest**
Found Violent Part In Film Exciting?	(n=57)	(n=37)	
	3.30	3.15	Approval*
	2.52	2.61	Interest
Film Lacked Violence?	(n=36)	(n=72)	
	3.35	3.18	Approval**
	2.56	2.50	Interest
Was Bored During Film?	(n=48)	(n=60)	
	3.28	3.18	Approval
	2.37	2.64	Interest***

Note: T-test analysis
*** Trend (p=0.06)**
**** p= >0.05**
*****p=>0.005**

The above table illustrates that interest behaviours were significantly lower for those individuals who said they were bored, would not watch the film again and who did not find a part exciting than for those for were not bored, would watch the film again and found a part exciting (t-test, t=3.42; df=102; p=0.001; t=-3.98; df=106; p=0.0001 and t=-2.12; df=106; p=0.037 respectively). There was a trend that participants who found a violent scene exciting were more approving of the film than participants who answered no to this question (t-test, t=-1.93; df=91; p=0.057). Finally, participants who said the film lacked violence were significantly more approving of the film than those who thought the film was violent enough (t-test, t=-2.31; df=105; p=0.023). These results indicate that a cross-validation between the two different sources of data was achieved. This strengthens the validity of conclusions drawn from both these response types.

5.6 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

5.6.1 Summary for General Hypotheses (see Table 5.5)

The results for average 'interest' behaviours across the film as a whole, indicated that Hypothesis 1a cannot be accepted as there was no significant difference between violent offenders and non-violent offenders. However, Hypothesis 1b is upheld as a significant difference was evident between violent offenders and non-offenders. In addition, a significant difference was also shown between non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

Similarly to the above, the results for average 'approval' behaviours across the film as a whole, indicated that Hypothesis 2a cannot be accepted as there was no significant difference between violent offenders and non-violent offenders. However, Hypothesis 2b is upheld as a significant difference was evident between violent offenders and non-offenders.

5.6.2 Summary for Specific Hypotheses (see Table 5.6)

5.6.2.1 Interest in Specific Scenes

In relation to scenes involving specific acts of violence, antisocial behaviour, threats and horror, only scenes of violence generated a significant difference and this was between violent offenders and non-offenders. Therefore only Hypothesis 3a can be partially accepted at this level of analysis.

However, when the violent and non-violent offender groups were combined (n=70) and compared as a whole with non-offenders (n=38), a number of significant differences emerged in behaviours depicting 'interest'. Offenders had moderate 'interest' for scenes of violence, threat and horror, while non-offenders showed more disinterest in these scenes.

No significant differences were found between the three groups for 'interest' in emotional imagery, sexual imagery, drugs, comedy and storyline. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 4 can be accepted. This lack of significant differences was also observed when offenders as a whole were compared to non-offenders.

5.6.2.2 Approval of Specific Scenes (see Table 5.6)

An analysis of scenes involving specific acts of violence, antisocial behaviour, threats and horror, found a clear significant difference only for scenes involving threats and this was between violent offenders and non-offenders. Therefore only Hypothesis 5c can be partially accepted at this level of analysis. This significant difference for 'approval' of threat persisted when the offender groups were combined (n=70) in comparison to the non-offender group. In addition, a trend ($p<0.06$, two tail) emerged, showing offenders to be more approving of violent scenes than non-offenders.

No significant differences were found between the three groups for 'approval' in emotional imagery, comedy and storyline. However, sex imagery and drug scenes showed a more complicated picture for the older age group (18 to 21 years). Non-violent offenders demonstrated significantly more 'approval' of sexual imagery than non-offenders or violent offenders. By contrast, violent offenders showed more 'approval' of drug scenes than both non-violent offenders and non-offenders. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 6 only can be partially accepted.

5.6.2.3 Interest and Approval for Specific Films (see Tables 5.8 and 5.9)

Hypothesis 7 is upheld, as the scenes within each film which showed significant differences between offenders and non-offenders, in terms of their 'interest' and 'approval', contained violent acts, antisocial acts, threat and horror. There were only four exceptions (17%) of the 24 scenes showing significant differences. These related to interest in the 'storyline' in the film *"Project Shadowchaser"*, to approval of emotional imagery in *"No Surrender"* and *"ID"* and to interest in sexual imagery in *"Love and a 45"*.

5.6.2.4 Cross-Validation of Results (see Table 5.10)

Of the five questions used to cross-validate interview responses with the behavioural observations, all five showed an association between how the participants answered and how they were directly observed in their 'interest' and 'approval' behaviours while watching the film. Therefore, Hypothesis 8 is upheld.

5.7 DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter was to identify the behavioural responses which were exhibited to violent video film material and to compare the behaviours of violent offenders, non-violent offenders and non-offenders for evidence as to whether violent films elicit significantly different behavioural reactions between the groups. The analysis was carried out on a variety of levels to hone the findings from the general (scene types) to the specific (particular defined scenes) and to isolate independent scenes where the behavioural response could differentiate offenders from non-offenders.

5.7.1 Interest In Films

Where a difference in mean interest scores occurred, it implied that one of the groups was just less interested than the other. A viable explanation for this can be linked to the particular films chosen. Even though they represented an eclectic sample of violent video films in content, several restrictions were placed on the choice of film by the research design. For example, it had to contain no well-known actors, have no big publicity surrounding the film and the film had to go straight to video to increase the chance of the primacy effect (discussed in full in Chapter 2: Investigation Methods and Procedures). This made it impossible to use big block-busters such as the "Terminator" or "Die Hard" series. Using less mainstream films which may be different from 'typical' violent films, may mean they don't appeal to as many people or in the same way as those which draw large audiences at the box offices.

Another explanation is that due to moral and legal constraints, it was unethical to show participants films classified as being age-inappropriate. Considering the findings that more films are watched by offenders and that offenders have preferences for violent films, the violence shown in the study films may have been considered too "tame" when compared to the usual films (Cert. 18) watched by the participants. Therefore, the study films were seen as only moderately interesting and not worth paying a lot of attention to. This question of the "tameness" of the films

will be discussed in the next Chapter 6 in relation to the cognitive priming of aggression.

Despite the logic behind these explanations, the cross-validation between interview responses and behavioural observations suggests that the behaviours measured, were reflecting interest by the viewer but the scale used was too narrow. Therefore, although significant differences were being made between offenders and non-offenders they all sat in the moderate to low interest range due to the narrowness of the definitions. The significant differences in interest behaviours between non-offenders and non-violent offenders and violent offenders, showed in the main, that offenders exhibited less disinterest then non-offenders. For the scenes where interest was actually displayed by a group, it was the offenders who showed interest, contrasting to the disinterest of the non-offenders, in particular violent or threatening scenes (in "Last Gasp") or for horror scenes in general.

From the direction of the results shown in Tables 5.6 and 5.7, it could be extrapolated from the findings that a qualitative difference between offenders and non-offenders could be determined with offenders showing more interest in violent scenes than non-offenders. This level of distinction was more apparent in the approval behaviours for the different groups, suggesting that approval was classified under a broader range than interest.

5.7.2 Approval of Films

Significant differences existed between offenders and non-offenders in approval behaviours for certain violent scenes (within different films) and a trend for this pattern for violent scenes in general. However, unlike the interest behaviours, offenders approved of some scenes where non-offenders disapproved.

A rape scene in one film ("ID") was one such scene where offenders approved of what they were seeing but non-offenders disapproved, one non-offender made the following comment in the film interview about this particular scene, ***"I felt angry when he was raping his wife because it was***

violent". In another film ("No Surrender"), there was a scene where the characters were stealing some motorbikes from a shop, offenders were significantly more likely to approve of this scene than non-offenders. An offender said he liked this scene because,***"I like bikes and it was good the way they stole them".***

One scene in "ID" which offenders approved of and non-offenders disapproved of was when the undercover policeman was hit by the woman he had been lying to. It is a possibility that offenders, many of whom state a dislike for the police, may have approved of the violence in this scene because they felt that the policeman deserved to be hurt. In other films, it was mentioned by an offender that he laughed when a police car was smashed up because he didn't like the police.

The theories based on social learning discussed in the introductory section of this chapter, referred to the importance of the viewer's interpretation of the violence being viewed on the screen in order for it to be retained and copied (Berkowitz, 1984). The above shows that offenders are more likely to see violence as good (by approving of the scene) which would make it easier for them to justify it. This may lead to them seeing it as an acceptable way of behaving and acting on this belief (either by direct imitation or by coding into a social script to be retrieved at a later time). Justification of violence in modern violent feature films is commonplace, thus allowing the viewer to see violence as 'ok' or something to be approved of (Berkowitz, 1984). Indeed, Gunter (1985) states that people who use physical violence themselves (such as young offenders) are less concerned about fighting between screen characters.

However, there are a number of other reasons why this notion of approval to various scenes and in particular, to violent scenes by offenders may arise. Firstly, as the last chapter has shown, offenders express a greater preference for violent films and like watching violence than non-offenders. It could be theorised that this would not be the case if they actually disapproved of what they were viewing. This is exemplified by this quote from a violent young offender, ***"When I see people running away from the Indian and he cut their ankle. I like seeing people get caught, cut and stabbed".***

Secondly, offenders have been shown to have more violent experiences within their own home (see Chapter 3) which can lead to them seeing violence as an acceptable form of conflict resolution (Berkowitz, 1993). This can mean that due to their parents' expression of violence towards them or other family members giving them this impression, they are more likely to approve of violence on the screen because they do not see it as wrong or unjustified. This distortion of attitudes to using violence can be strengthened by the violence they watch on the screen when it generally appears to be justified (Berkowitz, 1984).

5.7.3 Contextual Factors

There is a possibility that the results discussed above have been influenced by a number of different contextual factors. The main points are outlined below, but an extended discussion is given in Chapter 7 which describes the interaction between context and viewers' responses.

Firstly, the composition of the audience is seen as important in understanding reactions to a violent film (Hill, 1997). In the current study, people did not get to choose who they watched the film with as they were subscribed to viewing times based on their availability. This meant that some people were better acquainted with their viewing-partner than others. The degree of familiarity may mean that some participants were more self-conscious than others which may have affected their behavioural or verbal responses. In addition, the notion of being directly observed may also have affected their 'normal' viewing behaviour, although this influence would have been consistent across the whole sample.

Secondly, the individual scene analyses could be confounded by the fact that violence occurs within a number of very different contexts which may affect the approval and interest behaviours observed. One of these contexts is when violence and comedy are interlinked, as this can decrease the perceived seriousness of violent actions (Cole, 1998).

In order to examine this issue, the individual scenes which differentiated offenders from non-offenders for each film were identified as to whether a comedy element existed within a violent scene. Only two of the violent scenes, one from "Project Shadowchaser" and one from "Love and a 45" had such a combination, where jokes were given within a violent context. Therefore in the majority of violent scenes, offenders were approving of the violence per se more than the non-offenders.

It has been suggested that the overall contribution of film violence (often viewed as a steady diet), is more important than independent scenes within a film or viewing a particular film in creating an impression on those who are susceptible (Buckingham, 1996). However, this chapter has shown that the attention (interest) directed towards violent scenes needed for social learning to take place (Huesmann, 1982) is more obvious in offenders than non-offenders. Furthermore, offenders interpreted the violence as positive (approval) more than non-offenders. This type of interpretation is said to help retain the violent image and its use as a behavioural script more likely (Huesmann, 1982).

Further evidence for offenders being influenced by violent scenes is the fact that differences existed in approval and interest towards violent scenes, whereas parallel differences were less apparent for scenes which did not contain violence or threatening images such as emotional, comical and storyline scenes. This suggests that non-violent parts of the films were watched with similar interest and approval by both offenders and non-offenders. Thus, offenders do watch violent films differently from non-offenders, as differences which existed were more extreme for the violent or threatening components of the film.

It is therefore recognised that further behavioural work would be beneficial, particularly in relation to Berkowitz's (1984) theory on people being behaviourally 'primed' to act aggressively. It was difficult to assert this from the results in this chapter due to the categorization of behaviours into approval and interest. Although the behavioural catalogue included the act 'hits', which would be evidence of someone being primed for aggression, no participants used this behaviour during the time of viewing. However, the participants were told that the film would

be stopped if any dangerous behaviour occurred and this may have caused people to restrict their actions. Thus, no firm conclusions on the priming of aggressive behavioural reactions could be made.

Nevertheless, the contribution of evidence from this chapter that differential behavioural responses do exist between offenders and non-offenders, shows that the ethological approach holds a valuable source of information into the effects of screen violence debate.

5.8 SUMMARY

This chapter described the findings that show offenders are more approving and more interested in scenes from a violent film than non-offenders. The results mirror those of the film interview study (Chapter 6) in that few differences emerged between violent offenders and non-violent offenders. In fact, self-report measures from the interview were highly associated with the behavioural observations of viewing films, which cross-validates the significant differences between the offender groups combined and the non-offenders. However, as the introduction to this chapter explains, it is not possible to discuss an individual's responses to violent films just from a behavioural aspect. The next chapter, therefore, moves the discussion on from this approach to explore the influence of violent films on cognitions and emotions.

CHAPTER 6: THE COGNITIVE AND EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF VIEWING FILM VIOLENCE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study examined the cognitive and emotional impact of viewing a violent film from both a short term and long term perspective. In order to achieve this, the participants were interviewed in the immediate post-viewing period and over a more extensive time period of three to four months and nine to ten months after initial viewing. Due to all three interviews assessing this psychological aspect of violent film effects, this current chapter discusses both the initial interview and the two follow up interviews.

6.1.1 How does Screen Violence Influence the Audience Psychologically?

Perhaps the most basic level at which films can have a psychological impact on the audience is by encouraging the audience to feel a certain way by eliciting various emotions. This can be momentarily, as in a scene for example, provoking happiness, sadness or anger, or it can be the general emotional state felt, after the film has run to its entirety, which takes into account the different and often conflicting feelings and thoughts held throughout the whole viewing experience.

Feelings- Gross and Levenson (1995) asked participants to self-report the greatest amount of each emotion felt during the viewing of a particular film clip. They found that, although certain emotions could be elicited by the various clips, not all emotions were able to be elicited to the same extent. Philippot (1993) found that reports of amusement, sadness and a neutral state were

easier to elicit than anger, disgust and fear.

It was also discovered that, although one emotion may be felt more intensely than the rest, it was hard to provoke one discrete emotion without traces of other kinds,. For example, there appears to be a tendency for anger to be provoked concurrently with other negative emotions (Philippot, 1993). One of Gross and Levenson's (1995) observations which was taken into consideration in the current study is that, if the film had been seen before, more intense emotions were reported. This, the authors suggested, could be due to the viewer already having an idea of the total emotional involvement of the film. The primacy effect of viewing a particular film was maintained throughout the current study to eliminate such confounding influences on the emotions and behaviours displayed by the participants.

The idea of a film making the viewer feel a certain way is the pivotal point of the effects of screen violence research. It is, however, understood that just because the viewer feels or has a particular emotional state after the viewing experience, this does not automatically translate into them acting in a certain way. The film, by itself, may not be the motivational force for specific behaviours, but it may instead have a more indirect or discreet effect by allowing the expansion of pre-existing cognitions in the viewer.

Thoughts- If the viewer already holds aggressive cognitions (such as a person predisposed to being aggressive), violent screen images could impact on these existing thoughts and beliefs leading to the promotion of the use of violence at some point in an individual's lifetime. This concept of an individual's cognitions being elaborated to by violent screen imagery is the basis of two theories within the film violence debate. Both of these have been discussed to some extent in the section "Theories and Concepts on the Effects of Violent Film" within Chapter 1 and in the last chapter, although a brief outline is given below.

Berkowitz's (1984) "cognitive neo-association" theory describes this kind of influence as a person being 'primed' for aggression. Hostile thoughts can stimulate and activate other held angry feelings and even create the inclination to become aggressive (Berkowitz, 1993). Violent screen images can cause this kind of hostility to occur because they are highly visual and have an aggressive meaning, thus making them easy to recall. If, however, the violence portrayed on the screen is punished, then aggressive tendencies within the viewer are not activated (Berkowitz, 1993). Unfortunately, most modern films made these days, signify the message that violence is justified and therefore the priming of aggression can continue.

Huesmann and Eron (1986) developed the "social cognitive" theory to explain the influence violent screen images can have on the cognitions of the viewer. The authors describe the viewer as storing the image they have seen as a 'cognitive script', representing a way to behave. The individual does not just store the perceptual image (someone hitting another person, as shown in a violent film scene), but rather uses their own interpretation and judgements (they did it in anger because they were provoked) to provide a conceptual representation (Geen, 1990). These are then learnt and stored as information which can be used at a later date, if a situation arises which the individual feels is similar to their stored representation ('encoding specificity').

How something is encoded can depend on certain conditions within the visual fictional stimulus. If a scene stands out to a greater extent than others, maybe because it is more realistic or more violent, than there is a greater chance of it being 'put away' for later retrieval (Huesmann, 1982). A script can deviate from its original source, as "subsets of learned scripts may be converted into more general scripts that provide overall guiding principles for social behaviour" (Huesmann and Miller, 1994; p.162).

6.1.2 How Do People Become Vulnerable to What They View?

As shown in the first Chapter of this thesis, not everyone will be affected by what they see to the

same extent. These above theories suggest that people with pre-existing violent cognitions are far more susceptible to violent screen images, as they are more likely to have stronger aggressive connections or scripts which can be activated. This is of distinct relevance to the current study as the findings of Chapter 3 show that the violent offender group have significantly more of the personality traits and family background associated with a vulnerability to violent images on the screen, than the non-violent offenders and the non-offenders who participated. These personality characteristics included having the predisposition to be aggressive and a having low level of empathetic concern for others which have previously been associated with violent offences (Stein and Friedrich, 1972).

Violent offenders were also more likely to have experienced or witnessed violence from their parents. Family background has been shown to have a controlling influence on aspects of viewing preferences (see Chapter 4). However, it can also have a dramatic impact on the actual cognitions and emotions of the viewer to the extent that a combination of parental violence and television imagery can lead to later aggressive behaviour (Heath, Krutschnitt and Ward, 1986). Both Berkowitz (1984) and Huesmann (1982) claim that if screen violence is encoded within an environment of family violence, then the individual will recall violent screen images to resolve a hostile situation violently.

Vulnerable personality characteristics and family background factors are inter-related and lead to the individual evaluating scenes they see in a different and deviant way from people who do not possess these personality characteristics or dysfunctional family backgrounds (Bailey, 1993).

6.2 AIMS OF CHAPTER

Taking into account the presence of a vulnerable audience and Chapter's 3 findings that violent offenders have the characteristics linked to this susceptible group, the aim of this chapter is to examine the film characteristics which influence the participants' memory and identification with

the film and compare these differences across the three groups.

6.3. HYPOTHESES

The main hypotheses postulated for this Chapter are:

1) Violent young offenders will remember more from a violent video film than non-violent offenders and non-offenders immediately after viewing.

2) Violent young offenders will identify with a) violent scenes and b) violent characters more often than non-violent offenders and non-offenders immediately after viewing.

3) Violent young offenders will remember more from a violent video film than non-violent offenders and non-offenders after an extended time period from the initial viewing.

4) Violent young offenders will identify with a) violent scenes and b) violent characters more often than non-violent offenders and non-offenders after an extended time period from the initial viewing.

6.4 METHODS AND PROCEDURES

6.4.1 Method for Short Term Influences

6.4.1.1 Sample

The complete sample for the initial film interview consisted of 54 violent offenders, 28 non-violent offenders and 40 non-offenders (see Table 6.1) which was the same as the pre-film interview (see Chapter 4).

6.4.1.2 Procedures

To determine whether the violent video film had any influence over the participants in the short term; two of the psychological questionnaires, ***The Interpersonal Reactivity Index*** (Davis, 1980; 1983) and ***The Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and Anger Expression Scale*** (Spielberger, 1983; 1991) were repeated after the film to identify if any difference in empathy or anger levels occurred as a result of viewing violent material.

The two participants at each viewing were also given a questionnaire about the film they had just viewed to determine the impact of this film on memory for particular scenes and characters. These interviews were carried out with the two participants in separate rooms immediately after the individuals had finished watching the film. This was to restrict any discussion about the film which could influence answers given to the questions. It was important to get an individual's opinions and memories rather than ideas taken from each other. Any comments made about the film during the viewing were noted (although it was not possibly to record exactly what was said) during the direct observation which was discussed in Chapter 5.

6.4.2 Method for Long Term Influences

6.4.2.1 Sample and Take-Up Rate for Follow-Up Interviews:

Follow-up interviews were not completed for all the initial sample as some members either refused to take part in the later part of the project or were unable to be contacted. Overall, 86 participants completed the three month follow-up interview and 68 completed the nine/ten month follow-up. Sixty two participants (51%) completed both follow-up interviews; 25 people only completed the three/four month interview; and 6 people only completed the nine/ten month interview.

A similar percentage of violent offenders (70%), non-violent offenders (68%) and school/college students (75%) took part in the three/four month follow-up interview. However, a lower proportion of offenders took part in the nine month interview, although there was still a similar percentage of violent offenders (47%) and non-violent offenders (43%). As before, 75% of school/college students completed the nine month follow-up interview (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Number of Participants from Each Group who Completed the Initial Post Viewing and Follow-Up Interviews (N=122, N=86, N=68 respectively)

	Violent Offenders	Non-Violent Offenders	Non-Offenders
Immediate Post Viewing Interview	54 (100%)	28 (100%)	40 (100%)
3/4 Month Interview	37 (70%)	19 (68%)	30 (75%)
9/10 Month Interview	26 (47%)	12 (43%)	30 (75%)

6.4.2.1.1 Comparison of Follow-up Samples

Due to the attrition of the initial sample for the two follow-up interviews, it is important to establish whether the sample actually followed up is representative of the original sample. Biases can be introduced into the sample if the people who had taken part were very distinctive from those who had refused to cooperate further or who were not able to be contacted.

In order to identify whether such differences existed, the follow-up samples for both the three to four month and nine to ten month interviews were analysed for a comparison between those who did and those who did not participate in these two interviews. The offender and non-offender groups were compared independently on the various factors which appeared to be implicated in the relationship between family background, personality characteristics (intellectual ability, moral development, empathy and trait anger levels) and preferences for violent film viewing and violent film characteristics. Both non-violent offenders and violent offenders were compared as one offender group as this was the level of analysis for the follow-up interviews.

The within-group analysis for both the offender group and the non-offender group demonstrated that no significant differences occurred for any of the above variables, between those who participated on follow-up and those who did not for either of the two follow-up interviews. This meant that the offender and non-offender groups who agreed to complete both these follow-up interviews were representative of their original group. Thus, the analysis undertaken for the 'long term influences' was not liable to be subjected to bias from atypical populations being used.

6.4.2.2 Procedures

Two follow-up interviews were carried out at a three to four month period (Interview 1) and a nine to ten month period (Interview 2) after the initial viewing of the video film in order to determine the influence of the video film on long term memory. To reiterate the design of these

interviews from Chapter 2, the follow-up interviews comprised of:

A general information interview which looked at the whereabouts of the individual at the time of the interview; whether they were still in prison or secure accommodation and if they had been released, what was their current living arrangements.

A questionnaire related to the film they had seen during the initial viewing with questions about memory for particular scenes and characters.

A questionnaire which asked whether the participants had committed any delinquent behaviours and how frequently this had been since the last interview. This is to be discussed in Chapter 8.

The ***Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder*** was used to compare if there was a difference in emotional and behavioural problems between the initial viewing time and the follow-up interview.

The interviews were carried out irrespective of whether the participant had left the establishment, where they had originally been interviewed. The individuals were contacted directly through given addresses or indirectly through probation officers and social workers. The interviews took place at a convenient location for the individual participant (their homes, probation offices, other secure residential settings), in order to maximise the number of people agreeing to take part in this follow-up study.

6.5 Results

6.5.1 Results on Consistency of Response

The answers to several of the film questions were compared between the initial interview and the

first follow- up interview that was completed by the participant in order to determine the reliability of responses over the elapsed time period. For those individuals who completed all three interviews, a comparison was made across all three responses. A percentage agreement between the responses to the same question was calculated based on these individual comparisons. The questions used, were those which produced significant differences between the groups in the above analyses. Table 6.2 below shows the percentage agreement for people who completed the initial interview and only the three month follow-up interview (n=25), people who completed the initial interview and only the nine month interview (n=6) and people who completed all three interviews (n=62).

Table 6.2: Percentage Agreement for Short Term and Long Term Reliability Across the Initial and Follow-Up Interviews (N=93)

Interview Questions	Percentage Agreement		
	Three Month Only (n=25)	Nine Month Only (n=6)	Both Interviews (3 and 9 month) (n=62)
Character Remembered Most	72%	50%	63%
Film Was Boring	84%	67%	74%
Character Identified With	68%	50%	58%

The figures in Table 6.2 demonstrated that the participants did not always give the same response to the same question during the separate film interviews. However, the majority of comparisons produced a reliability over 60%. Those below this percentage, were looked at more closely to determine if there were differences between the non-offenders and offenders in the alteration of their responses.

The lowest figures of agreement were for those participants who only completed the initial and the nine month interview (n=6). The results were unable to be statistically analysed, but they showed that people who changed their mind were more likely to be offenders. For the character remembered most, of the three people who gave a different response, two were offenders who both changed from saying a 'good guy' to 'no one'. The non-offender altered his response from a 'bad guy' to a 'good guy'. For the character identified with most, all the people who altered their response were offenders. They all said a 'good guy' at the initial interview and then said 'no one' at the nine month interview.

For the character identified with, by people who completed all three interviews (n=62), more offenders (50%) than non-offenders (36%) answered differently across their three responses. However, if they were compared on whether they had changed their answer from the initial interview (short term) at the nine month interview (the long term), then there was no significant difference between the two groups. Fifty nine per cent of offenders compared to 75% of non-offenders gave the same response to both these interviews. For those who changed their responses between bad and good characters, there was no significant difference between the two groups as to whether they changed from bad character to good character or vice versa

The findings do suggest that some people's responses were not static and were subject to change over time. However, it would appear that these differences were not significantly related to offending behaviour.

6.5.2 Results for Short Term Influences

6.5.2.1 Post-film Psychological Measures

The two psychological questionnaires, ***The Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and Anger***

Expression Scale and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index which were assessed again after viewing the film, were compared across the three groups to determine if the significant group differences found in the pre-film interview were maintained in the post-film interview. Significant differences still existed for Trait Anger (ANOVA, F=3.19; df=2; p=0.04), Temperament (ANOVA, F=7.75; df= 2; p=0.0007) and Anger Out (ANOVA, F= 3.26; df=2; p=0.04) which mirrors the findings of the first interview (See Chapter 3). There were no such differences between the three groups for the scores from the Interpersonal Reactivity Index. However, if the total score on this scale was compared between offenders and non-offenders by means of a t-test then it was still evident that offenders, as a whole, were significantly less likely to show empathy than non-offenders (t-test, t=-1.99; df=120; p=0.049) which again is consistent with the findings from Chapter 3. The post-film mean scores are shown in Table 6.3 below for the three groups.

The pre and post scores for both psychometric questionnaires were then compared to determine if there were any significant changes in Anger or Empathy as a result of watching the film for any of the three groups (see Table 6.3). None of the comparisons for the Spielberger State Trait Anger scale were significantly different. However, the Anger Expression Scale comparisons were significant for two of the scales; violent offenders scored lower on the post-film measure for Anger-Out than they scored for the pre-film measure (t-test, t=2.16; df=53; p=0.03) and non-violent offenders scored lower on the Anger Expression scale for the post-film measure than the pre-film measure (t-test, t=2.29; df=27; p=0.03).

Despite the lack of significance in the comparison across the three groups for empathy in the post-film interview, when the data was analysed within the three groups for the pre- and post- film measures, the results showed that there were no significant differences between pre- and post-viewing scores on any of the sub-scales within any of the violent offender, non-violent offender or non-offender groups (see Table 6.3). Nevertheless, it does have to be noted that a trend was evident for a decrease in empathetic concern after viewing the film for both non-offenders and non-violent offenders, although these comparisons did not reach significance at the 0.05 level.

Therefore, for offenders only, the films viewed had a small immediate influence on the expression of anger that was measured, but no significant immediate influence on how the respondents scored on the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (which reflected their level of empathy).

Table 6.3: Comparison of Pre and Post Scores on the Spielberger State Trait Anger and Anger Expression Scale and Interpersonal Reactivity Index for the three Groups (N=122).

Mean Scores	Violent Offenders (n=54)	Non-Violent Offenders (n=28)	Non-Offenders (n=40)
State Anger			
Pre	11.09	12.71	11.65
Post	10.83	11.07	11.52
Trait Anger			
Pre	23.57	20.36	21.27
Post	23.00	19.54	21.33
Anger Expression			
Pre	32.78	29.96*	32.35
Post	31.72	27.57	31.88
Interpersonal Reactivity	54.62	57.70	61.27
Total	55.65	55.64	60.15

Note: Paired T-Test Analysis
***p<0.05**

6.5.2.2 Immediate Post-viewing Interview (see Table 6.4)

Due to the analyses not producing a distinction between violent and non-violent offenders, the following results are discussed in relation to a dichotomous comparison between the offender

and non-offender groups. Just one variable ("what they found exciting in the film") significantly distinguished the violent and non-violent offenders and therefore, only this finding was examined across the three groups.

6.5.2.2.1 Film Characters (See Table 6.4)

Two questions were asked about the characters in the film: "who was the first character they remembered?" and "who would they be in the film?". Responses were re-coded according to whether the characters were vindictively violent as opposed to those who were violent in self-defence and whether they were bad or good characters. A guide to the categorisation of characters was taken from Wilson, Kunkel, Linz, Potter, Donnerstein, Smith, Blumenthal and Gray (1995) "a good character considers the needs of others, whereas a bad character is motivated primarily by self- interest" (p. 12).

Males and female characters were combined into these categories as there was no significant difference between the offender and non-offender groups in whether they chose a male or female role in answer to either of the above questions. Both groups were more likely to identify with a male character as nearly all offenders and non-offenders said that the person they would most like to be was one of the male roles. However, in all the video films the lead roles were played by male characters, although "Last Gasp", "Love and a 45" and "Project Shadowchaser" had a female character in one of the main roles. The films "ID" and "No Surrender had a female character as one of the supporting roles whereas "Surviving the Game" had no female characters at all. This imbalance may have influenced their choice.

In terms of whether the character was vindictively violent or not, there was no significant difference between the two groups, either for "who they would be in the film" (who they identified with most) or "who they remembered most". The same was true if the characters were categorised as 'bad' or 'good' characters in response to the question of "who they remembered

most". However, a trend appeared with the same categorisation when it was referring to "who they would like to be" (this trend reached near significance: Chi-square= 3.44; df=1; p=0.06). Seventy per cent of non-offenders chose a 'good' character compared to just over half of the offender sample.

Nevertheless, a significant difference emerged in their answers to the question "why did you remember this character the most?" (Chi-square=4.54; df=1; p=0.03). While all the non-offenders gave a reason which was nothing to do with the violent tendencies of the character, 11% of the offenders gave a reason associated with the character being violent.

When they were asked the similar question of "why they would be that character?", there were no significant differences between the two groups. Less offenders said "because they were the hero or good person" than the non-offender group (12% and 29% respectively) and twice the proportion of offenders than non-offenders said they would be their chosen character because they were violent (10% and 6% respectively).

6.5.2.2.2 Scene Recall (See Table 6.4)

The last questions in the interview asked respondents to recall the first and last things that happened in the film. No differences were found between the groups in terms of the type of scene they remembered as happening first or last. Twenty per cent of offenders correctly recalled the start, compared to 35% of non-offenders. More offenders incorrectly remembered the start as being a violent scene than the school/college students (35% and 25% respectively) or remembered a threatening scene, when this was also the incorrect response (15% and 10% respectively). In terms of remembering the end of the film, the majority of both groups were correct in their reflections.

In response to a question about what scene they remembered most, the majority of both groups

recalled a violent scene. There was no significant difference between the two groups in this respect or in relation to why they "remembered that scene the most". However, a greater number of offenders remembered an anti-social scene than the non-offenders (12% and 7% respectively) and a threatening scene (10% and 7% respectively).

6.5.2.2.3 Attitude to the film (See Table 6.4)

Seventy per cent of students said they found the film boring, compared to nearly a third (32%) of offenders (Chi-square=15.98; df=1; p<0.0001). However, the reasons for saying this did not concern the action in the film, as the groups did not differ on whether they mentioned "no action in it" as justification for their response.

When asked if they found the film exciting and, if so, which part they found exciting, there was a significant difference between violent and non-violent offenders. A comparison across the three groups was therefore made, which produced significant differences between all the groups (Chi-square=16.87; df=4; p=0.002). Those who were violent offenders were the most likely to say that a violent part of the film excited them the most. Seventy per cent of violent offenders gave this response compared to 65% of non-offenders and, surprisingly, 35% of non-violent offenders. However, when those excited by violent scenes were asked why this part of the film excited them, there were no significant differences between the three groups.

Offenders were also more likely to say they would watch the film again: 73% answered yes to this question compared to 40% of non-offenders. When asked if they liked the type of film, more offenders (70%) than non-offenders (60%) said that they did like this violent type of film (the difference was not significant). When this question was followed up with "why did they like this type of film", the majority of offenders said it was because they like watching violence whereas the non-offenders liked the action in the film rather than specifically mentioning the violent aspect. In response to "why they didn't like the film", no non-offenders said "because it didn't

contain enough violence". However, a quarter of the offenders gave this response. Some answered by saying that the film had "too much violence in it": 25% of offenders gave this response compared to 43% of non-offenders (neither of these questions produced significant results to the 0.05 level).

6.5.2.2.4 Criticism of the Film (See Table 6.4)

In relation to whether respondents thought the film lacked violence. Forty per cent of offenders said they thought this compared to 18% of the non-offenders (Chi-square= 6.31; df=1; p= 0.012). Thirty nine per cent of offenders said that the film lacked action, but less than a quarter of non-offenders (23%) agreed. The non-offenders appeared to be more concerned with technical and production aspects of the film: 20%, compared to 1% of offenders, said that the film lacked good quality direction and actors. They were also significantly more likely to say that the film lacked a storyline (Chi-square=10.57; df=1; p=0.001). Over a third of non-offenders (38%), but only 12% of offenders said that this is what the film needed.

6.5.2.2.5 Film Classification (See Table 6.4)

There was a significant difference when respondents were asked to say what certificate they thought the film should possess. The majority of offenders and non-offenders (67% and 65%) agreed with the certificate that the film actually had. More offenders than non-offenders said it should be given a lower certificate (30% compared to 20%), however 15% of non-offenders were inclined to give it a higher classification than its actual one, whereas only 3% of offenders recommended that it should have a higher classification.

Table 6.4: Summary of Post Viewing Interviews (N=122, N=86, N=68 respectively)

	Initial Interview		3 Month Interview		9 Month Interview	
	Offenders (n=82)	Non-Offenders (n=40)	Offenders (n=56)	Non-Offenders (n=30)	Offenders (n=38)	Non-Offenders (n=30)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Film Characters						
Identify with good character	51	70*	50	66*	36	65**
Reason for character preference=violent man	11	0**	23	4**	20	0**
Identify with hero/ good person	12	29	11	39**	14	20
Identify with violent character	10	6	15	8**	11	0
Scene Recall						
Correct recall of start	20	35	24	16	21	30
Violent scene incorrectly recalled as start	35	25	51	40	35	27
Anti-social scene recall	12	7	/	/	/	/
Attitude to the Film						
Film boring	32	70**	41	57	43	62

Would watch film again	73	40**	/	/	/	/
Like this type (violent) film	70	60	/	/	/	/
Did not contain enough violence	25	0**	/	/	/	/
Too much violence	25	43**	/	/	/	/
<u>Criticism of the Film</u>						
Film lacked violence	40	18**	/	/	/	/
Film lacked action	39	23	/	/	/	/
Film lacked production skills	1	20**	/	/	/	/
Film lacked story line	12	38**	/	/	/	/
<u>Film Classification</u>						
Lower Cert. for film	30	20	/	/	/	/
Higher Cert. for film	3	15	/	/	/	/
Agreed with Cert.	67	65	/	/	/	/

Note: Chi-square or Fisher's Exact Analysis

*** df=1; p=0.06 Trend**

****df=1; p<0.05**

/= Not applicable for follow-up interview

6.5.3 Results for Long Term Influences

6.5.3.1 Three Month Follow-Up Interview on Film (see Table 6.4)

The questions asked for the three month interview were the same as those used for the initial film interview. As already noted, there were no differences between the violent and non-violent offenders. The results discussed are therefore a comparison of offenders and non-offenders.

6.5.3.1.1 Film Characters

There were no significant differences between the two samples in terms of the character they remembered most and the character they most wanted to be, whether classified as vindictively violent or not. A trend was found when the film characters were classified as 'good' or 'bad'. More non-offenders (66%) than offenders (50%) chose a 'good' character as the one they remembered most or as the one they most wanted to be. However, as with the initial film interview, there was a significant difference in the reason why they remembered that particular character the most. Twenty three per cent of offenders gave a reason associated with the violent nature of the character, compared to 4% of non-offenders (Chi-square= 4.63; df=1; p=0.03).

A significant difference was also found for the responses to "why would you be that character" (Chi-square= 15.05; df=1; p=0.001). (These differences did not reach significance in the initial film interview, although, the pattern of results was similar). The percentage of offenders who gave violence as a reason for wanting to be that character was nearly twice that of the non-offenders (15% and 8% respectively). More non-offenders than offenders said that they wanted to be that character either because they were a survivor or because they were the hero. In fact, the majority of non-offenders (39%), but only 11% of offenders, gave the latter response to the question.

6.5.3.1.2 Scene and Storyline Recall

As some while had elapsed between seeing the film and the first follow-up interview, participants were asked to recall the storyline of the film. This was to determine whether they focussed only on the violent aspects of the film rather than remembering the overall story. There were no significant differences between the two groups. The only distinction was that 5% of offenders could not remember the storyline at all, compared to none of the non-offenders. Both groups remembered the 'gist', rather than recalling the storyline in more detail. In terms of remembering a violent aspect to the storyline, there was no significant difference between the two groups. The majority of both groups talked about violence in their recall of it.

When asked to recall the first and last scenes in the film, there were no significant differences between the groups. Twenty four per cent of school students correctly recalled the start compared to 16% of the offender sample. In terms of incorrect memories of the start, just over half of the offenders (51%) incorrectly said that the beginning was violent compared to 40% of non-offenders. This pattern of responses was similar to the one found for the initial film interview.

In response to the question "what was the end of the film", the majority of both groups remembered it correctly. However, slightly more offenders (43%) incorrectly mentioned a violent ending compared to the non-offenders (37%).

With reference to the 'scene remembered most', again there were no significant differences between the two groups. However, both offenders and non-offenders, remembered a violent scene more than a non-violent one. Their reason for remembering this scene the most also failed to produce significant differences, as both groups gave a response which was not connected to the violence in the scene.

6.5.3.1.3 Attitude to the film

Unlike the initial film interview, there was no significant difference between offenders and non-offenders in terms of whether they thought the film was boring or not. More non-offenders than non-offenders did say that they thought it was boring, but the difference was not significant. Again, this response was not related to the action in the film, as there was no difference between the groups as to whether they gave "not enough action" as a reason for 'why the film was boring'.

Only two people from all those who took part in the follow up interview (n=86) had seen the film again since the last interview. There was an access component to this as obviously the offenders who had remained in prison since the first interview had limited access if the prison did not stock the film (which they did not at the time). However, the majority of school students said that they would not watch the film again. Seventy two per cent gave this response compared to only 38% of offenders.

6.5.3.1.4 Film influences

Participants were asked about the influence films had on them. The questions related to the influence of those they had seen since the last interview and in particular, if the study film had an influence. Few answered this question. Four said that a film they had seen in the last three months had influenced them in some way. Of the three offenders who answered the question, one **"liked the idea of robbing a bank and getting away with it"** (film not named), **"wanted to get a driving licence"** ('Licence to Drive') and another **"wanted to nick a Porsche and get a gun"** ('Bad Boys'). Six non-offenders said they had actually copied from a film they had seen in the last three months, but all said that they copied what was said rather than anything actually done.

Only three people said that the study film had influenced them in some way. Of the two offenders who answered the question, one said **"it gave me a high afterwards"** and the other that **"I know**

to check for police when robbing" (the characters in the film had been spotted by the police when stealing some motorbikes from a shop). The non-offender who responded said that **"the film had made him depressed"** as he thought it was a 'dark' film (the film was 'ID'). No one said they had copied anything from the study film. However, one violent offender did think that **"slashing the victim's Achilles tendons so they could not run away** (as shown in the film 'Last Gasp') **was a good idea"**. This offender had been in prison the whole time since seeing the film, and it is not known whether he would actually carry out this type of attack.

The last question asked respondents if the film reminded them of anything they had ever done. Significantly more offenders than non-offenders said that it did (Chi-square= 3.68; df=1; p=0.05). Eighty two per cent of the offenders who answered said that it reminded them of having fights and being violent.

6.5.3.2 Nine Month Follow-Up Interview on Film (See Table 6.4)

As with both the above interviews, the results of the final follow-up interview are discussed only at the offender and non-offender level. The results were analysed to see if differences occurred between the two offender groups, but no significant differences were evident.

6.5.3.2.1 Film Characters

For the questions about "who they remembered most", the results again proved non-significant, as with both the initial interview and the three month follow-up interview. In the same way, the trend towards offenders remembering the vindictive violent character and the 'bad guy' remained consistent. Sixty four per cent of the offenders remembered a vindictive violent character most, compared to 50% of non-offenders. A similar percentage of offenders remembered a 'bad guy' most, compared to 45% of non-offenders.

Unlike the two previous interviews, significant differences were found between the two groups in terms of "who would they most like to be". Eighty two per cent of offenders compared with 43% of non-offenders chose a vindictively violent character. Further confirmation of this difference was found when the characters chosen were classified according to whether they were 'good' or 'bad'. Sixty four per cent of offenders chose a 'bad guy', as against only 35% of non-offenders (Chi-square= 4.75; df=1; p=0.03). However, this significant finding was related to the presence of family violence and is discussed in the "Case Analysis of Character Preferences and Family Background" section below.

The questions referring to "why they would be that character" or "why they remembered them the most" again produced significant or near significant responses. In relation to the second of these questions, all of the non-offenders mentioned a reason unrelated to violence but 20% of the offenders gave a reason associated with the character's violence (Chi-square= 6.25; df=1; p=0.01). Forty per cent of the non-offenders said "they would like to be a particular character" because they were the survivor, with 20% saying it was because they were the hero. Only a small percentage of offenders gave either of these two reasons (both 14%); whereas 11% (compared with none of the non-offenders) said it was because they were violent. A similar pattern of results had emerged from the first two film interviews.

6.5.3.2.2 Scene and Storyline Recall

As with the three month follow-up interview, participants were asked to recall the storyline as best they could. This did not produce significant differences, although 13% of the offenders who answered the question could not recall the story at all. All of the non-offenders could recall it to some extent.

More non-offenders were able correctly to recall the start of the film: 30% were able to do so, compared to 21% of offenders. Again, in the same way as the other two film interviews,

offenders were more likely than the school/college student sample to incorrectly remember the start as violent or threatening. Thirty five per cent of offenders incorrectly said the start contained violence compared to 27% of non-offenders.

Slightly more non-offenders (56%) correctly remembered the end of the film than offenders (48%). However, a slightly higher percentage of offenders incorrectly recalled the last scene as containing violence (48% compared to 41%). This was similar to the three month interview.

Regarding the scene remembered most, the difference between the groups was again not significant. The majority of both groups described a violent scene as the one they particularly remembered. A similar number of both groups gave a reason unrelated to the violence in the scene (88% for offenders and 84% for non-offenders).

There were no significant differences between groups in terms of the other scenes recalled. Thus, percentages were very similar between the two groups when the scene types were divided into 'just violent', 'violent and other types' and 'all non-violent'. Non-offenders did remember more 'all non-violent' scenes and fewer violent scenes than the offenders, but the differences were not significant.

6.5.3.2.3 Attitude to the film

The groups did not differ significantly in terms of whether they found the film boring or not. Non-offenders (62%) were more likely than offenders (43%) to say that they found the film boring. Like the other two interviews, there was no difference between the groups in terms of whether they classed the film as boring because there was a lack of action in it.

The initial interview revealed significant differences between all three groups in relation to what they found exciting about the film, although neither of the two follow-up interviews demonstrated

these differences, due to the smaller sample sizes. Nevertheless, there were different patterns between the non-offenders and the offenders, as a whole, in the follow-up interviews. The offender group was equally split with one half saying that it was a violent scene that excited them and the other half that it was a non-violent scene. Only 20% of non-offenders said that it was a violent scene which excited them. The majority of non-offenders (60%), named a non-violent scene as exciting.

There was no difference between the two groups in terms of whether they had seen the film again. Therefore the analysis is not affected by different patterns of repeat viewing since the first showing of the film. Access opportunities affected the reason why respondents had not seen the film again, as a number of offenders (particularly the older age group) had remained in prison the whole time since the first interview. More non-offenders (two thirds) than offenders (46%) said that they would not actually want to see the film again, mirroring the findings from the previous two interviews.

Assessments of the level of realism of the violence in the film were not significantly different between the two groups, although more offenders (57%) than non-offenders (47%) said that it was not realistic.

6.5.3.2.4 Film influences

The proportion of non-offenders who felt that films they had seen since the last interview had had an influence on them was greater than that in the offender group. One quarter of non-offenders, but only 8% of offenders, said they had been influenced by films (Chi-square= 4.16; df=1; p=0.04). The films which they named as having an influence ranged from comedies like "The Nutty Professor" to real life-like dramas like "Trainspotting" and violent films like "Heat". When asked "how did they influence you?", two of the offenders said the films they had watched **"showed prison didn't work"**. None of the other answers related to violence and were more to

do with the moral message in the film. For example, one of the school students said that "The Nutty Professor" showed him **"not to judge people by appearances".**

As might be expected from the preceding answers, more non-offenders (30%) than offenders (8%) said they had copied parts of the films they had seen (Chi-square= 5.40; df=1; p=0.02). Again, the type of films implicated, ranged from comedies to violent films. As in the other two interviews, the majority of people said they copied **"what was said"**. Two people said they copied violent aspects. One, a non-offender, said he had just been **"messing around"**, whereas the other, an offender, said that he acted **"mental"** when having an argument, like the character he had seen.

No one said that they had copied anything from the study film. When they were asked if they thought that the person who had watched the film with them had been affected by it, the majority of both groups said "no". Fourteen per cent of offenders said it may have had an influence, compared to only 3% of non-offenders (one person). The latter respondent said the film probably made his colleague **"more aware of football hooliganism"**, suggesting an educational element (the film shown was "ID"). However, the offenders' answers were more varied, with suggestions such as **"it may have made them more violent", "well he is in a mental institution now"** and **"he'll probably try and rob a place now"**. One offender put forward the idea that the film might **"scare the person"** who saw it with him.

Unlike at the three month interview, there was no significant difference between the groups in terms of whether the film reminded them of anything they had previously done. Fifty five per cent of offenders said it reminded them of being violent, compared to a third of non-offenders. Non-offenders were more likely than their offender counterparts to say that it reminded them of seeing violence, but not actually participating in it.

6.5.3.3 Case Analysis of Character Preferences and Family Backgrounds

A case analysis was also carried out on the nine month film interview data. This was again to determine the significance of violent family backgrounds on character choice and memory. As before, the analysis was carried out separately on the offender and non-offender groups to highlight these differences irrespective of offending behaviour.

Of the 30 non-offenders who answered the question about who they wanted to be in the film, 17 wanted to be the good guy, 4 did not make a definite choice and 9 people (30%) wanted to be the "bad guy". Of these 9 people who chose the "bad guy", 33% had experience of family violence while the other 6 (67%) had no history of family violence at all (see Table 6.5).

Of the 37 offenders who answered this question, 10 wanted to be the good guy, 9 did not make a definite choice and 18 offenders (49%) wanted to be the "bad guy" in the film shown to them. Of those who chose the bad guy, 78% had a history of family violence, with the remaining 22% having no history of family violence (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Identification with 'Bad Guy' in film and Family Background (N=27)

	Family Violence Present (n=17)	**Family Violence Absent (n=10)**
Offenders (n=18)	78%	22%
Non-Offenders (n=9)	33%	67%

Note: Chi-square Analysis
***df=1; p<0.05**

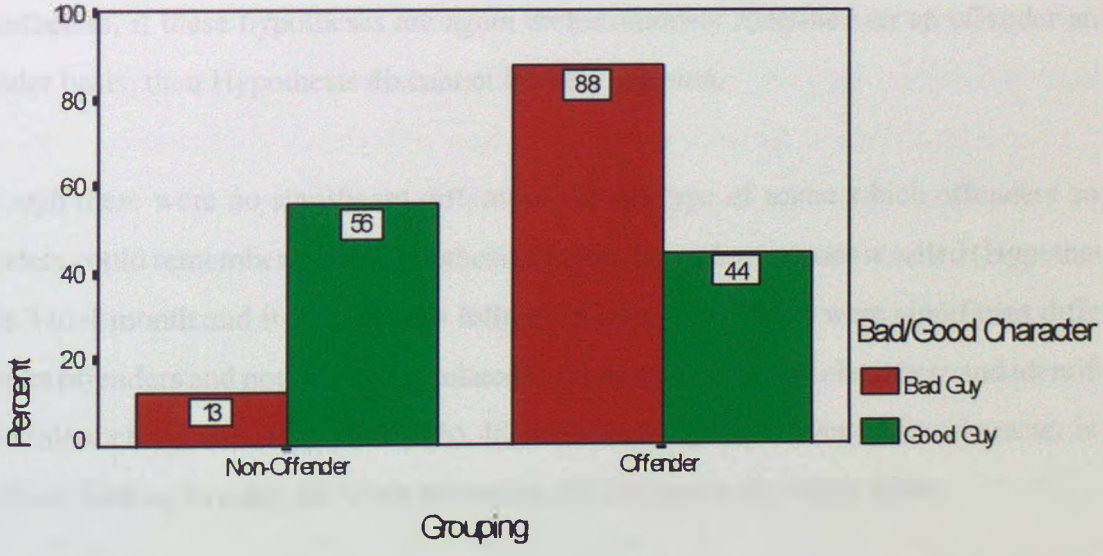
The above analysis of cases showed that non-offenders who wanted to be the "bad guy" in the film were less likely to come from violent family backgrounds than offenders who chose to be the bad character (Chi-square=5.08; df=1; p=0.02).

6.5.3.3.1 Controlling for Family Violence

A comparison between offenders and non-offenders controlling for a history of family violence (see Figure 6.1), revealed a significant difference between the two groups, in relation to their chosen film character, only when family violence was present (Chi-square=6.88; df=1; p=0.008).

However, no such distinction between offenders and non-offenders was evident if family violence was not a part of their backgrounds. This followed the same pattern as the preference for violent films; which only significantly differentiated offenders and non-offenders when violence by a parent was present, but failed to reach significance when family violence was absent.

Fig 6.1: Identification with Film Characters by Groups from Violent Families (n=67)



6.6 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

With respect to the first two hypotheses put forward in this chapter, 1) that violent offenders will remember more from a violent video film than non-violent offenders and non-offenders immediately after watching and 2) that violent young offenders will identify with violent scenes and violent characters more often than non-violent offenders and non-offenders post initial viewing, there was very little support for these notions at a significant level, other than violent offenders remembering a scene that excited them because it contained violence more than non-violent offenders and non-offenders. This was the only significant distinction between the three groups for the initial film interview. However, there is evidence that these hypotheses cannot be fully rejected. If the violent offender and non-violent offender groups are combined and compared to non-offenders then differences emerge. In general, offenders recalled violent characters more than non-offenders and therefore these hypotheses, defined on a dichotomous level, are partially upheld.

The third and fourth hypotheses that violent young offenders will remember, identify with violent scenes and violent characters more than non-violent offenders and non-offenders after an extended time period from the initial viewing also cannot be upheld as there were no significant differences between violent offenders and non-violent offenders.

Nevertheless, if these hypotheses are again dichotomously redefined on an offender and non-offender basis, then Hypothesis 4b cannot be fully rejected.

Although there were no significant differences in the type of scene which offenders and non-offenders could remember most (Hypothesis 3) or in the violent scenes recalled (Hypothesis 4a); at the 3 to 4 month and 9 to 10 month follow-up interviews, there were significant differences between offenders and non-offenders related to memories of violent characters and identification with violent characters (Hypothesis 4b). Identification by the viewer with a character is a very important finding to consider when reviewing the influence of violent films.

6.7 DISCUSSION

6.7.1 The Influence of Violent Films on the Viewer's Cognitions

The differences in psychometric test scores between groups both pre and post film viewing indicate that particular cognitions underlie a preference for violent films and identification with violent characters. Compared with non-offenders, offenders are less able to appreciate other people's viewpoints or to feel empathy in general, and are more likely to have an aggressive temperament, with cognitive distortions about behaving aggressively (eg. physical confrontational thoughts). This low empathic concern, coupled with higher aggression, leads to the individual seeking out violent film for entertainment. This, in turn, may reinforce violent thoughts and feelings, thereby creating more entrenched cognitions. This possible cycle of effect was also recognised by Geen (1990) who stated that, "the link between television violence and aggression may be circular and self-sustaining" (p.94).

Berkowitz's (1984) cognitive Neo-Associative theory suggests that film violence could connect and activate other aggressive ideas and feelings, leading to the individual being "primed" for aggression after viewing screen violence. This could mean that for those individuals with such predispositions to aggression and the lowering of empathy, watching such scenes is potentially dangerous. The argument put forward by Thomas et al. (1977) about desensitisation to film violence is in accordance with this view. Thus, he maintains that people are less concerned about others, but also more likely to behave aggressively after viewing film violence.

In the majority of violent films (eg: Pulp Fiction), the victim's perspective is rarely taken. This may make it easier for the offender to lack concern for others and to be unaware of the implications of their violent behaviour for others. Gunter (1985) has shown that not seeing the consequences of violence for the victim, can increase the likelihood that a film will promote the learning of aggression. This is discussed in the following chapter on the importance of contextual

factors.

Nevertheless, the present study cannot conclusively support these arguments since a "priming" of aggression and a significant lowering of empathy and ability to take other's perspectives (as measured by The Spielberger State Trait and Anger Expression Scale and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index respectively) did not result from seeing the films presented. This study did find a trend for non-violent offenders and non-offenders to decrease in their level of empathetic concern after viewing the film which is consistent with the desensitisation argument (Thomas et al. 1977) discussed above, although this was not coupled with an increase in aggression for either of these two groups. In fact, for the Anger Expression scale, scores for offenders decreased after viewing. However, it could be argued that this may have been an effect of the offenders becoming more defensive in their answers when they were asked the questions again.

In the same way that the results could not be used as evidence of 'priming', it was also felt that this was not evidence for the opposite approach to film violence, 'catharsis'. This suggests that watching violence on the screen causes a release in frustration and tension and thus a decrease in aggression (Gunter and McAleer, 1990). As the same effect was not apparent in all three groups, this was not thought to have occurred.

However, it has been shown by previous research that violent screen imagery can lead to people forming cognitions about aggression and having aggressive thoughts after exposure (Bushman and Geen, 1990), therefore it may be that the tests used in the current study were not sensitive enough to identify changes in immediate arousal or aggression on a cognitive level and that the conclusions made on the basis of them, must only be tentative.

An extension to this idea is that the priming process leading to the display of actual aggression is too complex to be represented by immediate arousal levels or to be detected through the use of psychometric tests. That is to say, priming can occur through viewing violent material but the results in terms of aggressive behaviour may only materialise in certain circumstances. This is

directly linked to the "encoding specificity" discussed by Huesmann and Eron (1986) as part of the social script theory; that violent scenes or images are retrieved when the circumstances are similar to those when they were encoded. People may therefore have violent cognitions after viewing a violent film (as shown in Bushman and Geen's (1990) study by listing aggressive thoughts), but whether these are actually expressed depends on context. The thoughts may be retrieved later as aggressive behaviour depending on individual differences, family background and the situation that individuals find themselves in.

A full testing of the "priming" argument may be confounded by the legal constraints, which made it unethical to show participants films classified as being age-inappropriate. This has been discussed in the previous chapters in relation to the interest shown by the participants in the film and the view that offenders, who like to watch violent films, may have found the film 'tame'. Indeed, more offenders than non-offenders said the film was suitable for a lower age group than its actual classification. Since aggressive- related thoughts are only activated if the individual perceives the scene as aggressive (Jo and Berkowitz, 1994), this may mean that immediate arousal effects were not evident because scenes were not thought to be 'really' violent. This may also indicate that the BBFC classification system is correctly judging film material for their specific age-related recommendations.

Therefore, cognitive theories cannot provide a full explanation for the effects of film violence. Nevertheless, they offer a partial explanation of the violent reasons why offenders recall particular scenes as exciting and why they remember a particular character the most (both in the short and long term).

Jo and Berkowitz (1994) theorise that for those who already hold violent and aggressive thoughts (which are interconnected), what they watch in terms of film violence can remind them of other occasions where similar aggressive thoughts occurred. The associations made between these are subconscious and operate out of the individual's awareness but can be reinforced by repeated viewing of violent imagery. It is possible that this subconscious activation is stronger for those

individuals who hold violent thoughts and feelings associated with violent peer groups and violent family backgrounds. This would explain why some people are more vulnerable to violent images than others.

6.7.2 Violent Families and Violent Films

For those who already have well-established violent cognitive pathways, the prominence of violence in their lives, particularly as a result of growing up in a violent home, may have continually strengthened these aggressive thoughts. These are then subconsciously activated and reinforced when individuals are exposed to violence in others on and off the screen (Jo and Berkowitz, 1994). The earlier work of Berkowitz (1984) and Huesmann (1982) recognise the importance of family violence in understanding how violent films influence the cognitions of the viewer, as family violence and screen violence can be located on the same 'thought network'. Hence, screen violence is not seen as wrong or aggressive. For example, Heath et al. (1986) state "Anecdotal evidence for this possibility comes from observations by the interviewers in this study that many inmates did not consider sticking a gun in someone's face as an unkind or aggressive act. Instead, they viewed such behaviour simply as a means to an end (generally the acquisition of material possessions or money)" (p. 187).

In their study, Heath et al. (1986) compared violent offenders with a non-criminal population to identify the relationship between exposure to television and exposure to family violence. They found that abuse from both mother and father and television viewing were all associated with offending behaviour in their sample. No one form of violence, on its own, could account for all later criminal behaviour. Participants who were exposed to two forms of violence, for example violence from their father and television violence were more likely to become involved with criminal activities than those individuals only exposed to one. Matching between fictional representations and real-life violence creates an association between the two. This is known as the 'double-dose effect' (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli, 1980).

Interestingly, as in this study, Heath et al. (1986) were also unable to distinguish the effects of non-violent and violent television viewing. Thus, they suggest that maybe other influences, rather than violence per se, are at work in creating this relationship between television viewing and violent crime.

6.7.3 The Process of Character Identification and Creating Relationships

Heath et al.'s (1986) conclusion stresses the importance of the comparability between the television screen and real life experiences for determining the translation from screen image to actual behaviour. Merging exposure to violence in real life and violence on the screen is a powerful combination, allowing individuals to become vulnerable to the influence of fictional stories and characters that they see. For example, remembering a character because they are violent may be associated with having real-life violent role models, which are interconnected with the offender's aggressive thoughts and feelings, activated by the film. In addition, people who identify with characters are more likely to have greater aggressive tendencies (Gunter and McAleer, 1997).

The process of identifying with a character within a film allows the viewer to become more closely involved emotionally with what is happening on the screen. Berkowitz (1993) found that angry male participants would be more likely to act violently when they were provoked by someone, if they had seen a film villain being the deserved victim of violence. This aggression is less likely to be instigated in the viewer if they have not formed close attachments with the characters in the film. Thus, film censors are usually concerned with aspects of filming, in addition to the story line, which create a distance between the viewer and the film and reduces the risk of an individual becoming aroused by the violence (Berkowitz, 1993).

Hill (1997) perceives the relationship between viewer and characters as 'dynamic and fluid' and believes that people can identify with certain actions of a character rather than the character as

a whole. This can be influenced by the information given to the viewer about the character's own personality and circumstances and by the viewer's own personal experience which can lead to the viewer asking themselves the question, " how would I respond to this situation?" (Hill, 1997).

The use of personal experiences and the viewer's knowledge of violence in the real world, creates an understanding of the characters's feelings which extends beyond those shown in the film. Viewers attach additional motives and emotions to the character which uniquely reflect their own experiences and help to build some form of relationship with that character, although it does not necessarily lead to them actually wanting to be that person (Hill, 1997).

This study has shown that the experience of real life violence in an individual's family background influences the degree of emotional involvement that the individual has with the film and its characters. For some people, building an affiliation with a fictional character is achieved because they feel that this is a safe relationship (Hill, 1997). This escape into fantasy is described by Ashbach (1994) as being an integral part in the influence of violent screen imagery on personality. Offenders from violent families mainly chose favourite actors (see Chapter 4) who were known for their violent roles (eg. Jean Claude van Damme). However, this chapter has also shown that offenders were more likely to identify with a 'bad guy' in the film up to ten months after viewing. This study highlights that this difference between offenders and non-offenders is only apparent when family violence is also present.

Ashbach (1994) claims that television viewing is part of an individual's unconscious which represents their desires and fantasies. One such desire in the child is to be secure and invulnerable. If their real-life world does not create a situation for this to occur then the child may look elsewhere, including a fictional setting for comfort. Therefore, a child within a violent family may wish to be like a powerful fictional character in order to 'protect' themselves from what is happening to them. The identification with the 'bad guy' may also represent the individual's notion that being violent is justified as this is what they have been taught by their parents (Berkowitz, 1993). This can mean that people subjected to parental violence will not have to

overcome moral constraints when siding with the 'bad guy' in the film.

6.8 SUMMARY

The findings of this chapter imply that there were few differences between offenders and non-offenders in their answers to questions related to the film. However, one of the most important results was that offenders were more likely to identify with a bad character in the film, which was related to their experience of family violence.

An additional component, which also has been recognised by other researchers as an influence in the relationship between screen violence and the learning of aggression, is the issue of contextual factors. This will now be discussed in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER 7: THE CONTEXT OF THE VIEWING EXPERIENCE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter has discussed the influence a violent film can have on the viewer's cognitions and memories. The final part looked at this influence in relation to their personality characteristics and family environment and highlighted that these factors exert more influence on a person's offending behaviour than violent film viewing.

However, the viewing process does not just concern what the viewer brings with them to the viewing experience, but also incorporates within-viewing situational factors (Hill, 1997). These aspects make up the viewing environment and include, location, audience and screen stimuli. What this amounts to is the assessment of the importance of contextual features produced when watching a film and by the film itself.

Although some of these examples have been discussed in previous chapters in relation to psychological or behavioural impacts of violent films, this chapter will explore the importance of context.

7.1.1 Location and Self Censorship

The most obvious way to define location as a contextual factor is that it describes where a viewer watched a film. The main distinction being; a) the home environment (either one's own home or someone else's) or b) in the cinema. The former location accounts for terrestrial television, video and satellite films, whereas the other accounts for films specifically for cinema presentation. This is an extremely important distinction to make because there are different stipulations over what films can be seen in a cinema and on a video player in the home. Indeed, what scenes within the same film can differ when seen in the cinema and on a video player. As

Chapter 1 illustrated, The Video Recordings Act (1984) requires video films to be adhered to tighter standards than their cinema-shown counterparts. This is due to the knowledge that people watch video films and cinema films very differently (Hill, 1997).

For viewers of videoed material, whether from terrestrial or satellite transmissions or, hired and bought through stores that stock videos films, the remote control acts as a extension for viewers to select exactly what they watch and how many times they watch. This can mean an individual can repeat and freeze-frame a particular scene over and over again or in juxtaposition to this, the viewer can select what they do not want to see and fast-forward over parts of the film. This freeze-framing and fast-forwarding can be seen as a form of control to help a child make sense of the film. Children can pause and repeat sections they did not understand to gain further information. For disturbing scenes, it allows the child to seek reassurance (Laidler, 1998).

Despite this, the very nature of this exercise in control by the viewer has brought worry to researchers and to people working within the censoring industry. The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) have two extra considerations for video films which are more problematic than for cinema films. Firstly, under-age individuals are not allowed by law to be supplied films with an older age certificate. This is easy to enforce in a cinema environment where people can be asked for identification if their age is questionable. Video hire shops can also enforce an age limit on the supply of video film, but once the videos are out of the shop there is no legal restriction on a child obtaining a film from friends or even from parents and watching it. Indeed, the increase in children having television in their own rooms often means that parents are not aware of what their children are watching.

Secondly, due to the use of the fast-forward and freeze-frame facilities on video players/recorders, the BBFC also consider that the video film will not always be viewed as they have watched it for classification purposes. This type of self-censoring cannot happen within the cinema environment because unless the viewer walks out or closes their eyes, the cinema film is watched in real-time from start to finish in the sequential order in which it was directed and produced.

The real problem concerns the viewing of violent scenes devoid of the overall storyline where such scenes are seen out of context and the consequences of violence are not recognised. Indeed, due to this problem being identified in the pilot study, a standardised procedure to prevent the viewer interfering with real-time viewing was implemented in the main study of this research project.

The act of jumping from violent scene to violent scene can mean that post-violent scenes depicting victims suffering will be 'skipped over'. Gunter (1985) says that scenes where physical harm is seen can produce empathy in the viewer which may inhibit their aggression. If the viewer concentrates on the acts which produce this harm, rather than the harm itself then they are less inclined to connect the two together and recognise the pain of the victim from the violent actions.

An extension to this notion is that the viewer may stop or fast-forward the video before the 'bad guy' is brought to justice, as is the case in so many violent films. This will leave them thinking that the person got away with being violent, because in their eyes, there were no negative consequences. Wilson et al. (1995) in The National Television Violence Study in the USA suggest that unpunished violence, creates the greatest risk for the learning of aggression. They found that punishment for the 'bad guy' occurs at a different point from when they actually were violent and this is mostly at the end of the film. Therefore, if the viewer stops before this, the violence will not be seen as bad or wrong on the basis that no punishment was administered to the perpetrator.

7.1.2 The Audience: Sharing the Viewing Experience

Just as location can influence self-censoring and screen effects, so can the presence of other viewers. One of the easiest ways that this can be seen is that people find it much harder to walk out of a full cinema auditorium than to simply switch off a video tape or television set (Hill, 1997). The presence of a peer group of movie-goers could inhibit an individual from self-censoring because they would have to publicly announce their decision by leaving.

Peer influence could also determine a person's choice of film. An individual may not want to see a particular film, but may find themselves unable to avoid it because the rest of the audience want to see it. Although, it could be argued that they could leave the room or not go to see the film, they may question whether they would lose respect if they do not agree. This would be more prominent in older children and adolescents where status with peers is strived for. It could also be seen as more influential for males who may feel a greater responsibility to watch in order to assert their masculinity amongst their peer group (Hill, 1997).

Social and personal thresholds are used by the viewer when they watch violent material to determine how they self-censor or distance themselves from select parts of the film. The former, social thresholds, describe the type of violence which is seen collectively as disturbing, this sharing of judgment can differ depending on the composition of a particular audience group. For example, all male audiences may share a different view from a mixed-gender audience. In contrast, personal thresholds are unique to an individual and subjectively linked to the individual's experiences, in particular, to their experience of real-life violence (Hill, 1997).

This self-distancing can be done physically by looking away (or using the remote control to ignore parts) or mentally, by creating a diversion (thinking about something else) to what is being seen (Hill, 1997). This mental distance can also be accomplished by individuals telling themselves that it is "only a film", if something appears to frighten or disturb them. Younger children will find this kind of mental distancing harder than adolescents or adults because they have more trouble in distinguishing reality from fiction and may confuse parts of the two together (Van Evra, 1990).

Both social and personal thresholds can be influenced by other viewers. In the same way that peer pressure can make people watch a particular film, so it can also stop them from self-censoring. People are aware of other's reactions to a film despite saying that they were just watching the film (Hill, 1997). An individual may not wish to draw attention to their feelings and thus limit their behaviours or reactions to a film or scene from that film. This could have implications for the results in Chapter 5 where direct observation of the participants' behaviours needed to be overt.

A final point to make on the nature of the audience is that violent films may have a differential impact on the viewer dependent on their relationship to the other audience members. Watching with parents may involve an explanation into what is being viewed in an attempt to educate the child or young person (Gunter and McAleer, 1997). In sharp contrast, watching violent films with peers may exaggerate the effects of viewing violence if the film is discussed and watched with violence seen in a positive manner (although this could be said to be true of parent and child audiences). This is of particular relevance to the notion of a vulnerable audience as these young people are the least likely to have parents who will spend time viewing with them (Van Evra, 1990) and also these people are more likely to be involved in delinquent peer groups where violence and anti-social conduct is highly acclaimed (Berkowitz, 1993).

This notion of a relationship between members of the audience is also discussed in Chapter 5 with reference to the behavioural responses made while watching the film with another participant.

7.1.3 Screen Stimuli

The importance of contextual factors within the viewing experience is no more profound than for the actual violent screen material. Cole (1998), in the UCLA Television Violence Report, states that "The issue is not the mere presence of violence but the nature of the violence and the context in which it occurs. Context is key to the determination of whether the violence is appropriate" (p.25). It does still have to be remembered that context and screen violence are not completely independent from an individual's personal knowledge, based on their life experiences. They will of course interact together influencing the viewer's perceptions and thus, their responses (Hill, 1997).

7.1.4 Genre

Influences from context can occur at all levels throughout the film, from an individual scene to

the whole film, in terms of the genre of the film. At the genre level, different types of films can affect how the violence portrayed in them is perceived. Gunter and Furnham (1984) examined viewers' perceptions from programme extracts of different genres which varied the relatedness to everyday reality. They concluded that how violence is perceived within a film depends on the fictional setting in which it occurs. For example, science-fiction films (such as "Project Shadowchaser" shown in the current study) are seen as not frightening or disturbing as they are so divorced from reality (Gunter and Furnham, 1984).

This is paramount in the present study for two reasons; firstly, the films chosen represented a variety of settings; science-fiction, thriller, horror, crime, martial arts and road movie. This could influence the impact they have on responses given, both on the questionnaires and behaviourally. Secondly, the 'priming of aggression' is said to occur only if an individual perceives the scene as aggressive (Jo and Berkowitz, 1994). If some genres of films (such as science fiction) lead to violence scenes not being seen as aggressive then this may mean that immediate arousal effects were not evident for some of the films shown. This may partially account for the lack of evidence in the last chapter that aggressive feelings increased after viewing. These suggestions have been noted to some extent in Chapters 5 and 6, although detailed discussion was reserved for the current chapter.

Gunter (1985) showed the differences which occurred in the perceived seriousness of violence in differential settings. In his study, looking at the dimensions of television violence, he found that differences occurred within the same film type (crime dramas) located in two different countries, the USA and the UK. This was mainly linked to who was committing the violence, which will be discussed in the next section. However, the relevance of a cultural difference is of significance as only one of the films shown in the study was a British film ("ID") and the rest were American.

This British film, would therefore have been more realistic to the participants as they were all from the UK and secondly, the film reflected the football subculture within the UK which again could have been related to by the all-male participant group. Indeed, one offender gave the

following reason for remembering a scene the most, "***I remember the pub scenes because we used to meet in the pub before and after the game***".

7.1.5 Realism

Van der Voort (1986) found that the more realistic a programme, the more children became involved emotionally. In older children (16 years and above), realism is often measured against the yardstick of actual experience or the plausibility of it happening, either for themselves or for others known to them (Van Evra, 1990). The above quote, shows that the offender is drawing on his own life to connect with his memories of the film. Therefore, it could be said that offenders may have become more involved than non-offenders in some scenes, due to them having more real-life experiences similar to those in the violent film. This was shown in the last chapter where 82% of offenders said that the film reminded them of having fights in real life. This linking of fantasy to reality has also been discussed in Chapter 6 in relation to family violence and violent film viewing.

7.1.6 Individual Scene Contexts

At a more specific level, the individual scenes have their own contextual influences on the violence they contain. A cross-over between different aspects within a scene can alter the perceptions of violence. For example, the linking together of comedy and violence can often make the violence seem inconsequential (Cole, 1998). This is apparent in Philo's (1997) study of young children discussing the cult movie "Pulp Fiction" where violence and comedy were interwoven throughout the whole script. The young children thought it was cool to shoot people because the characters who committed the shootings had style (through their attitude and lighthearted approach to killing people) and were seen as "cool" role models.

A classic example of this, from "Pulp Fiction", is when one of the lead characters "Vincent" played by John Travolta (an American actor), shoots someone in the back of his car when his gun goes off accidentally, possibly caused by a bump in the road. The humour, all be it black, is apparent, detracting the viewer from the serious point that a man is dead for no reason. This presence of humour also discourages the viewer to feel empathy for the victim because the film concentrates on the consequences for the perpetrators; the fact that they need to get their car clean and get rid of the body. As it was discussed earlier, this lack of emphasis on the victim's suffering can allow the viewer to perceive the scene as less violent or disturbing (Gunter, 1985).

Within the films shown to the participants in the current study, comedy was an element in a few of the violent scenes which could have influenced the approval and interest behaviours exhibited, as they could have been approving of the humour rather than the violence. This can be seen by two offenders who both chose a violent scene when asked which scene made you laugh?, "***when the robot came back cut in half, because he (the robot) made a joke***". Another offender chose a scene which portrayed a person hitting another person's head repeatedly against a tree. Instead of realising the pain that this must have caused the person, the participant responded by saying "***it looked funny***". However, as discussed in Chapter 5, this linking together of violence and comedy only occurred in a small minority of the violent or threatening scenes which differentiated offenders from non-offenders.

These examples do show how easy it is for violence to be set in the contexts which have been found to promote the learning of violence for the viewer. Other factors which have also been isolated for this learning process, are the justification for violence (linked to rewards and punishments) and the consequences of violence (Wilson et al. 1995). These will now be discussed with particular reference to the films used in the current study and the characters involved in these films.

7.1.7 Perceived Causes and Consequences of Screen Violence: Related to Film Characters

As identified in the "Location and Self-Censorship" section above, film violence which is portrayed as justified, maybe because it is rewarded or left unpunished, has been shown to pose a risk on the learning of aggression. In fact, it is conceivable that this is the most important contextual factor for the interpretation of violence by the viewer (Wilson et al. 1995). In addition, the consequences of violence, in terms of harm from violent actions, is also said to increase the risk of imitating filmed aggression, if not shown (Gunter, 1985).

Both of these factors were studied in the National Television Violence Study by Wilson et al. (1995) from a timing perspective. This meant that the researchers looked at whether they occurred straight after the violent act (immediate reinforcement) or at the end of the programme or film (overall pattern of reinforcement). They found that timing was especially important for younger viewers who often find it hard to connect earlier actions with later consequences. Children may also find it hard to understand consequences of behaviour, so unlike adults, they will more readily imitate what they see. This has enormous implications for children watching age-inappropriate films (Van Evra, 1990) as the more extreme forms of violence shown in Certificate 15 and 18 films, are classified only as suitable for those who recognise and take account of the consequences, but are not suitable for those who do not.

It is not possible to discuss the viewer's perceptions of film violence without recognising the relevance of the actual characters who display the violence within the film. Gunter (1985) asserted that discerning justification and consequences of violence separately for 'good' and 'bad' characters is an important distinction to make. These differences are also important to relate to the overall film setting. Gunter (1985) found in a comparison of UK and USA crime dramas that violence by the criminal character was more violent and disturbing in the American setting. In sharp contrast to this, violence by the law enforcer was seen as more serious and violent in the UK setting. There was also a difference between violence by characters of different genders. In the British programme, violence by males was seen as more serious, whereas in the American programme, violence committed by females was seen as worse.

Gunter (1985) also looked at the influence of observable perceived harm which caused violent scenes to be seen as more violent than non-observable harm. The crucial factor was surprisingly, not whether a victim died (fatal injury), but whether the victim appeared to be in pain. Non-fatal scenes were actually perceived as slightly more serious than fatal scenes due to this depiction of suffering by the victim.

7.2 METHOD

Both of the above factors, consequences and justifications, together with the causes of violence and the perceptions of 'good' and 'bad' characters were examined in the current study through the use of questions from the nine to ten month film questionnaire. However, due to the number of participants diminishing over the course of the follow-up interviews, some of the information from the film questionnaires was unable to be subjected to statistical quantitative analysis, but was instead used to provide qualitative responses on perceptions and context. Table 7.1 shows the questions from the overall film interview which were chosen for qualitative analysis.

Table 7.1: Questions from the Film Interview chosen for Qualitative Analysis

Questions	N	
	Offenders	Non-Offenders
Who do you think was the hero in the film? Why?	25	24
Who do you think was the main bad guy in the film? Why?	33	28
What caused the hero to be violent? (The reason given for his violence)	23	22
What caused the bad guy to be violent (The reason given for his violence)	31	23
Do you think the hero got away with their violence?	21	23
Do you think the bad guy got away with their violence?	32	26
Overall, what do you think caused the violence in the film?	33	30
Overall, what do you think were the consequences of the violence in the film?	32	30
Where the victims did not die, do you think the victims were harmed by the violence? How?	32	28

7.3 QUALITATIVE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

7.3.1 'Heros and Baddies'

Who do you think was the hero in the film? Why?

Who do you think was the main bad guy in the film? Why?

In the majority of cases within the current study, people from all three groups who watched the same film, selected the same characters for the hero and the bad guy as each other. These characters chosen were the ones depicted in the film as typical of either the hero or bad guy role. The only two exceptions were in the films "ID" and "Love and a 45" where people chose a character who, although was bad in some sense also fitted a heroic role as well. In "ID" some people selected the main character 'John' who was portrayed as a hero among the football hooligans. This is explained by one offender who said, ***"John was the hero but not in a good way, he was to the other fans".*** This reasoning, however was noted by members of all three groups.

In "Love and a 45" the majority of people selected the main character 'Watty' as the hero but there was a distinction between offenders and non-offenders as to the reason why they said this. The non-offenders recognised that there was a 'bad' element to his character (he was a criminal who robbed stores), but said that ***"he was the closest to the good guy, he was a victim of circumstances"*** or ***"he was good and bad, he was a criminal but had good intentions".*** The offenders, however, said he was the hero because ***"he was a good guy"***or ***"he saved his wife".***

These two films also caused some difference in opinion over who was the bad guy. For "ID", both offenders and non-offenders either chose 'John' or one of the hooligans as the bad guy. John was said to be the main bad guy because he had been a policeman but had turned bad when he got too involved. The offenders were more likely to name John in answer to this question than the non-offenders who mainly said one of the hooligans. In "Love and a 45", one person (a non-offender) differed in his response to all the others by saying that the policemen (sheriffs) were the

bad guys because ***"they were bent"***. The fact that only one person named an American law enforcer as the bad guy ('sheriffs' in "Love and a 45"), but many named an English law enforcer ('John' in "ID") could be interpreted as following the line of Gunter's (1985) findings that violent law enforcers in UK film settings are seen as the most violent, whereas criminals in USA film settings are perceived as being the most violent.

7.3.2 Justification, Motivation and Consequences of Violence for Good and Bad Characters

What caused the hero to be violent?(The reason given for his violence)

What caused the bad guy to be violent (The reason given for his violence)

Do you think the hero got away with their violence?

Do you think the bad guy got away with their violence?

Wilson et al. (1995) discussed the concept of rewards and punishments for violent characters and differentiated between good and bad characters in a similar manner to Gunter (1985). At the overall level, they found that bad characters are punished in 62% of programmes compared to 15% for good characters. Characters who are a mixture of good and bad are punished somewhere between the other two (33% of the time).

In the films shown in the study, the hero characters chosen by the majority of participants did appear to go unpunished at the end of the film. The only exceptions noted by participants were 'John' in "ID" and 'Nora' in "Last Gasp" who were said to be punished because firstly, 'John' lost everything at the end (girlfriend, home and job) and secondly, 'Nora' although managing to kill the bad guy, then became possessed with an evil spirit which was recognised as not being good.

This lack of punishment for the good guy was highlighted by Wilson et al. (1995) and they added to this observation by saying "Thus, the characters that viewers, in particular children, are most likely to identify with are rarely discouraged for acting aggressively" (p15).

The bad guys chosen, however with the exception of "Surviving the Game", did not always receive punishment according to the participants. Some people said that although the character had died or been arrested at the end (punishment), they got away with violence (rewarded) throughout the film as they had not been caught for other things they had done. This was recognised by people from all three groups, for example, one non-offender said in answer to the question "Do you think the bad guy got away with being violent?", ***"yes at the beginning as they killed people but at the end no, he died"***.

It is possible that if this question was re-phrased to say "Overall, do you think the bad guy got away with being violent?", then more people would have concentrated on the end result, whether the person was still alive or had been caught to make their decision. In line with Wilson et al. (1995), it can be seen that many violent acts do go unpunished at the time they are carried out and it is only the end of the film where the full consequences of violence for the bad guy can be seen.

In terms of the justification of violence (which included the motivation) of the particular characters, one of the main themes was that for the heros in all films except "ID", violence was needed for self-survival or it was used because the person was reacting to the actions of others (was provoked). In this way, some people saw it as justified. This was seen as more extreme in the offenders' responses as one non-violent offender said, ***"She protected her friends"*** so ***"She was violent to be kind... had a good reason to be violent"*** . A violent offender even extended this argument by saying they were ***"doing it for the right reason... not being violent in that sense"***.

This individual's response, therefore, followed the line of reasoning that if someone is violent but 'justified' then they should not be classed as a violent person. The interesting part to this is that the 'right reason' perceived by this violent offender, was not the need to survive, as the non-violent offender's quote is describing, but was actually to exact revenge on someone. This, to some people, is not a justification and is certainly not as easy to rationalize as being violent for self-defence purposes. This was illustrated by one non-violent offender, talking about the same film as the violent offender. Although he recognised the same cause of the character's violence

"anger", he used an opposite qualifier by saying ***"but that's no excuse".***

Violence for personal gain (eg. money) was recognised by some people as the motivation behind the good guys' violence, but only by offenders. However, this was seen as a much more common response for the bad guy's violence. Another response for the bad guy's violence, which was not given for the motivation of the good guy, was that they were just violent and liked to behave like that. In most cases, the responses appeared to indicate that the bad guy's violence was not justified in the same way as the good guy, who was using it to survive or because they had no choice. One non-violent offender said that the bad guy had a ***"misconception of life as it should be... thought he could get away with murder".***

The above responses show that violence by the good guy is mainly justified which again poses the same danger to the viewer as when the good guy is left unpunished. One example from "Love and a 45" is of an extremely graphic violent scene when 'Watty' and his girlfriend 'Star' shoot two policemen. The fact that the policemen are acting in a violent manner makes the violence of 'Watty and Star' seem justified and needed for self-defence. All participants named 'Watty' as the hero, despite this scene, which creates this danger that violence is being perceived as good and it is when this type of thought occurs, that learning from filmed violence is more likely to happen (Wilson et al. 1995).

7.3.3 Overall Perceived Justification, Motivations and Consequences

Overall, what do you think caused the violence in the film?

Overall, what do you think were the consequences of the violence in the film?

Two questions asked for this section determined the motivations and consequences behind the violence in the overall context of the film. The overall causes of violence generally reflected those discussed above with survival, money and anger being key answers. These correspond to the three main motives described by Wilson et al. (1995), protection of self and others, personal gain and anger.

Answers given, which deviated slightly from this were the following. In the film, "ID", people emphasised the nature of the peer group of the football hooligans with alcohol, peer pressure and the general sub-culture all being implicated. In "Last Gasp" the possession of the character by an evil spirit was recognised. (These causes were both unique to the films in question). Finally, in "Love and a 45" one of the violent offenders, also convicted for drug offences, mentioned that drugs had been a cause as well as the personal gain of money.

The consequences of violence ranged across a variety of answers from whether people lived or died to actual discussions about whether the film showed violence as a good solution to situations. These answers did not really differ across the groups with individuals from all three groups saying that the film showed that ***"you don't gain anything from violence"*** (non-offender), ***"are worse off if use violence, don't need violence"*** (non-violent offender) and ***"didn't do any good, all messed up"*** (violent offender).

However, at the other extreme, although the non-offenders said that consequences for violence as shown in the film were ***"respect, fun"***, the offenders who answered the question appeared to read more into what they saw. Examples from them were, ***"it was good for Watty, he could stand up for himself"*** (non-violent offender), ***"harm others, little rush and nothing else"*** (violent offender), ***"can't be violent if don't plan it, will be caught otherwise"*** (non-violent offender) and ***"scared other people..had to let it out"*** (violent offender)

This emphasis on planning, the 'rush' and 'letting violence out' all do not appear in non-offender answers which may suggest that offenders are using some of their own experiences of violence in considering the consequences of violence and may also be more accepting of violence than their non-offending counterparts. This view is particularly apparent in the rest of the quote from the last violent offender listed above, ***"....it's good to be violent, let anger out".***

7.3.4 Perceived Harm

Where the victims did not die, do you think the victims were harmed by the violence? How?

All six films in the study showed physical pain and injuries after violent acts, although these ranged throughout the different genres as to what had caused the pain. In some films, guns were used, which included lasers in the science-fiction film. In other films, most of the injuries were caused by more close-up fighting which culminated in someone being stabbed with some implement. Gunter (1985) showed that cutting or stabbing was seen as the most violent type of violence. One of the most extreme stabbings in the current study's films was in "Love and a 45" where a tattoo gun was used to stab someone repeatedly in the head. Evidence of physical harm was shown by blood pouring over the man's face and him screaming.

For all the films shown, participants recognised that the victims were physically harmed. People named particular instances such as someone having their legs blown off, or being beaten up and mentioned bruises and cuts that they could physically see. Responses to the open-ended question about harm given by members of all three groups (with the exception of "Surviving the Game"), also included psychological or emotional aspects as well as the physical suffering. Psychological suffering was described by a collection of answers which included being scared or anxious, being distressed and being traumatised by seeing others hurt. This type of responses showed that the majority of viewers recognised that harm goes beyond that which is visual and impacts on the psychological state of the viewer.

Harm or suffering was recognised for all the film types even for the science-fiction film, although this could be due to the direct question forcing people to make a decision which they may not have made when watching the film by themselves. For two people, harm was not seen as evident as the overall ending showed the people survived and therefore it was thought that they would not suffer from what they had been through, ***"No harm to them...happy ending"*** was the response from one offender and one non-offender said ***"It changed him during the hunt but wouldn't***

matter afterwards".

This last person is talking about "Surviving the Game" where it is hard to imagine that being hunted down to be killed would not have some long term effect on a person. This is directly opposite to the answers from the majority who understood that harm from violence can continue for a long time after the violent act has occurred. An example where the wording used by a participant may again reflect personal knowledge of this long term impact of violence is the following quote from an 18 year old school student, ***"People are hurt physically and being bullied puts you down".***

7.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The responses to the interview questions indicated that participants saw the hero's violence as mainly justified and unpunished which are two of the various aspects of filming which can increase the chance that aggression will be learnt from the screen (Wilson et al. 1995). Although the questions asked to the participants did not produce many real differences between the three groups in terms of their verbal responses, it has to be remembered that the offenders have a higher level of the personality and background factors characteristic of 'vulnerable' individuals and that these contextual factors could have a greater 'learning' impact on them than on the non-offender group.

The following chapter provides additional information for the participants in relation to their delinquent behaviours as it is possible that the non-offenders may have displayed anti-social behaviours comparable to offenders which may account for the lack of difference in verbal responses to the questionnaires discussed in Chapter 6 and the current chapter.

CHAPTER 8: THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUITY OF DELINQUENCY AND CRIME

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The prominence so far in this thesis has been on how video film violence can influence offending behaviour of young people. However, there are of course many other factors which contribute to the development and continuation of delinquent and criminal behaviour. This chapter therefore, takes a broader perspective on delinquency and crime.

8.1.1 Theories of Delinquency and Crime

Within the literature, numerous theories of crime have been expounded to explain the antisocial activities exhibited by some adolescents and teenagers. It is important to give an overview of the major theories when considering the effects of video violence on the individual.

The biological and learning perspectives have already been introduced in Chapter 3, that is whether people are born to be criminals due to inherited genes or physical anomalies, or whether they learn from role models within their environment (see Blackburn, 1993 and Hollin, 1992 for reviews of these theories). However, the sociological perspective has not been discussed previously.

The sociological stance indicates that the imbalance within the structure of society is to blame for criminal behaviour in a number of ways. Firstly, the degree of 'social deprivation' is found to be highly associated with the number of criminal convictions (Kolvin, Miller, Fleeting and Kolvin, 1988). Secondly, people who are exposed to sub-cultures where criminality is seen as the norm are more likely to offend. Indeed, the differential association theory suggests that delinquents are

more likely to associate with people who display the same kind of behaviour (see Sutherland and Cressey, 1970).

Thirdly, the material values of society may influence those people with no legal means of gaining access to the acquired 'status' goods to turn to crime as described by 'control theory' (Blackburn, 1993).

Nevertheless, sociological explanations have been called into question due to their lack of adequacy in explaining why some people commit crimes without material benefits but because they gain pleasure from doing so (Blackburn, 1993). Emphasis on the imbalance and inequality in society also does not explain white-collar crimes (which is not linked to social deprivation) or violent crimes which are not always committed for financial benefits.

8.1.2 Predictors of Delinquency

The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development (Farrington, 1995), followed 411 South London males from the age of 8 to the age of 32 with the aim of highlighting various factors as predictors of later delinquent behaviour. Utilising information from when the participants were aged between 8 and 10 years, the authors identified six categories of predictors of later criminal behaviour. These were; (1) Antisocial child behaviour and being a troublemaker at school; (2) hyperactivity-impulsivity-attention deficit; (3) low intelligence and poor school achievements; (4) family criminality; (5) family poverty, including low income and large family size and (6) poor child rearing practices by parents, including a lack of supervision and parental conflict.

Of the 55 males who had a high number of predictive factors, 37 (67%) were convicted for at least one offence by their 25th birthday (Farrington, 1995). Therefore, these predictor variables were surprisingly accurate in their ability to predict the later delinquency of the participants.

The role of the family can therefore be seen as an important influence on the development and

continuation of delinquency behaviour in an individual, although there is no clear causal explanation due to intercorrelations between the factors. For example, large family size is said to be associated to delinquency (Farrington, 1995). However, this is not a simple association as large families will be under more strain financially, parents will be less able to supervise their children due to the number of them, there is more likely to be overcrowding and there may be greater exposure to delinquent siblings (Blackburn, 1993).

One of the most important findings from the Cambridge Study is the persistence of delinquency. "Delinquency is only one element of a much larger syndrome of antisocial behaviour that tends to persist over time" (Farrington,1995, pp.936). This suggests that convicted offenders usually start their delinquent careers at a young age by firstly becoming involved in delinquent acts (such as causing trouble at school and playing truant). This can then lead to an escalation into criminal behaviour as the individual becomes older, often culminating in the young person being caught and incarcerated for their crimes.

8.2 AIMS OF CHAPTER

This chapter therefore attempts to explore the development and progression from juvenile antisocial acts to the offences leading to their conviction by comparing the nature, seriousness and frequency of self-reported delinquency of offenders and non-offenders across their lifetime and in the specified follow-up period.

8.3 HYPOTHESIS

The following hypotheses are proposed:

1) Offenders will be significantly more likely to report family problems than non-offenders at the follow-up interviews

2) Offenders will score higher delinquency scores based on weightings for seriousness and frequency than non-offenders throughout their lifetime.

3) Offenders will score higher delinquency scores based on weightings for seriousness and frequency than non-offenders over the three to four month follow-up period.

4) Offenders will score higher delinquency scores based on weightings for seriousness and frequency than non-offenders over the nine to ten month follow-up period.

8.4 METHOD

8.4.1 Sample

As discussed in Chapter 6, not all of the initial sample completed the follow-up interviews. Therefore, the delinquency questionnaire and the general information interview described in this chapter were unable to be administered to all of the original 122 participants. They were however, completed by 86 people in the three to four month interview; 37 violent offenders, 19 non-violent offenders and 30 non-offenders and by 68 people in the nine to ten month interview; 26 violent offenders, 12 non-violent offenders and 30 non-offenders (see Table 8.1).

Table 8.1: Number of Participants who Completed the Follow-Up Interviews (N=86 and N=68 respectively)

	Violent Offenders (n=37)	Non-Violent Offenders (n=19)	Non-Offenders (n=30)
3 to 4 month interview			
Inside Prison	24	15	-
Outside Prison	13	4	30
9 to 10 month interview	**(n=26)**	**(n=12)**	**(n=30)**
Inside Prison	10	2	-
Outside Prison	16	10	30

8.4.2 Procedures

During the two follow-up interviews described in the Method chapter and Chapter 6, a questionnaire related to general information was administered to the participants. This assessed where they were living, if they or any of their family had personal problems and the future plans of the individuals.

A questionnaire was also given which asked whether the participants had committed any delinquent behaviours (stealing cars, damaging property, taking drugs etc.) and how frequently they had been committed since the last interview. The frequency was measured on a 8 point scale: 0) never 1) once or twice in the past three/nine months, 2) once a month, 3) once every two to three weeks, 4) once a week, 5) 2-3 times a week, 6) once a day and 7) 2-3 times a day.

The delinquency questionnaire differed slightly between the two interviews, as the later interview (nine to ten months) also asked about delinquent behaviour during the participant's lifetime rather than just limiting it to the last few months. Participants were asked how old they were when they

first committed the act and their age when they stopped that particular delinquent behaviour, (if they had). They were also asked to give details as to how frequently they had acted in such a way over their lifetime. This scale was measured on six points of frequency: 0) never, 1) once or twice in my lifetime, 2) occasionally, 3) frequently, 4) very frequently and 5) most of the time.

8.4.3 Weighting the Questionnaire Scores

For the comparison between offenders and non-offenders, the scores for each questionnaire item were weighted for severity and frequency of occurrence. Firstly, the results for each separate questionnaire item were collated together based on the offence subscales used by Elliott and Ageton (1980). (These subscales had been previously based on Glaser's (1967) offence typology).

The subscales used in the current study were:

1) **PERSON-** Predatory crimes against the person (violent and sexual assault, robbery)
2) **PROPERTY-** Predatory crimes against property (burglary, stolen goods, theft of motor vehicle, vandalism)
3) **ILLEGAL-** Illegal service crimes (selling drugs, buying alcohol for minors)
4) **PUBLIC-** Public disorder crimes (carrying a weapon, disorderly conduct, drunkenness, making obscene phone calls, cannabis use)
5) **STATUS-** Status crimes (runaway, alcohol use, truancy)

Within each of these subscales, questionnaire items were weighted by seriousness (see Table 8.2) using a scale based on guidelines from previous studies (Rossi, Waite, Bose and Berk, 1974; Wolfgang, Figlio, Tracy and Singer, 1985 and Warr, 1989), where items were given higher weightings if they were perceived as more serious than other items (eg. in terms of maximum sentencing). In this study, the seriousness scores were then multiplied by the frequency to obtain

a score related to both these factors.

Frequency scores used for multiplication were based on the relevant scales shown above: Hence, for delinquency occurring between interviews, the scores were multiplied by, (0) never, (1) once or twice in the past three/nine months, (2) once a month, (3) once every two to three weeks, (4) once a week, (5) 2-3 times a week, (6) once a day and (7) 2-3 times a day. For delinquency measured over the participants' lifetime, scores were multiplied by (0) never, (1) once or twice in my lifetime, (2)occasionally, (3)frequently, (4) very frequently and (5) most of the time.

Table 8.2: Relative Seriousness Weightings for Offence Subscales

Offence Category	Rank
Person	
Forced someone to have sexual intercourse	9
Attacked another	8
Had Gang Fights	7
Used Force to get something from another	6
Used force to get something from an adult in an institution	5
Used force to get something from someone your age	4
Hit Parent	3
Hit an adult in an institution	2
Hit someone your own age	1
Property	
Set fire to building	12
Broke into building or car	11
Handled or sold stolen goods	10
Stole car	9
Took car without permission	8
Stole something between £5 to £50	6
Stole something from an institution	6
Stole something from family	5
Damaged other property	4
Damaged property in institution	3
Damaged property belonging to family	2
Avoided paying for things	1

Illegal	
Sold 'hard' drugs (Class A)	4
Sold drugs (not Class A)	3
Bought alcohol for a minor	1
Lied about your age	1
Public	
Took Drugs	7
Carried a weapon	6
Thrown objects	4
Been loud and disorderly	4
Made an obscene telephone call	3
Begged from strangers	2
Been drunk in a public place	1
Status	
Drunk alcohol	5
Runaway from home	4
Been suspended from school	3
Skipped classes	1
Cheated in school tests	1

8.4.4 Comparing Delinquency Between Follow-Up Interviews

In order to eliminate any confounding effect from offenders not having the same opportunities to commit delinquent acts due to being incarcerated the whole time between the respective interviews, the offender groups were divided into those who had spent any time outside prison in the period between the initial interview and the respective follow-up interview and those whose sentence continued over the whole of this time period. Due to the differentiation between offenders who had spent all the time inside prison and those who had been outside for some time, the sample numbers became too small to compare violent offenders and non-violent offenders as two independent groups and therefore they were collapsed into the one offender group and compared with non-offenders. Once again the scores were weighted for frequency and seriousness and compared using the five collated offence subscales.

The differentiation of offenders based on whether they were inside or outside prison during the

follow-up period, may beg the question how do offenders commit offences whilst in prison? Due to obvious restrictions, offenders who are incarcerated for the whole time between interviews do not have the same opportunity to commit all the types of delinquent acts (such as stealing cars), as offenders who have been released. Nevertheless, the prison environment is not totally restrictive and there is still opportunity for offenders to steal property, handle stolen goods, set fire to property, have fights and assault other young people or staff and possess or take drugs. However, it could be argued that the chance of being caught is greater within such a closely-guarded institution. Whether this threat of 'getting days put on a sentence', once caught and adjudicated for a delinquent act or offence inside prison, acts as a deterrent is still open to question.

8.4.5 Limitations to Providing Cross -Validity between Self-Report and Official Statistics

Despite the confidentiality of responses being assured to the participants when answering the delinquency questionnaire, the validity of such self-reports must still be questionable and taken into consideration when discussing the results. One way to overcome this is to cross-validate information from a number of sources. An attempt was made in this study to achieve this by comparing information from the follow-up interviews with the convictions recorded officially by the Home Office Offenders Index.

However, this proved impossible to complete due to the specificity of offence types and descriptions given by the Offenders Index which was not duplicated by the responses given to the open-ended question about past convictions. Offenders tended to give a general overview about their offending history as often the number of offences was too high to elaborate on or remember in greater detail. For example, an offender may say he had committed a burglary but fail to mention that he was also convicted of handling or selling stolen goods as a result of this, which would have been recorded as a separate offence on the Offenders Index.

It was also not possible to validate the responses concerning offences committed during the time

period between the initial interview and the respective follow-up interviews as the Offenders Index available at the time was not up to date for all the current offences.

Despite the above limitations, a cross-validation was carried out on self-reported offences by offenders inside prison during the follow-up period, as the crimes they reported which they had been caught for, were all validated by information on adjudications inside the prison (disciplinary hearings).

8.4.6 Treatment of Data

The data was subjected to Chi-square analyses for categorical data and to ANOVA and t-tests for the comparison between group scores based on seriousness and frequency weightings. Due to the attrition of the sample for the follow-up interviews, the majority of analyses for this chapter has been carried out on an offender and non-offender level, with violent offenders and non-violent offenders combined.

8.5 RESULTS

8.5.1 General Information Interview (Answers from both follow-up interviews)

8.5.1.1 Living Circumstances (see Table 8.3)

Eighty four per cent of offenders were currently in prison when interviewed for the three to four month interview, 12% lived with their family and 4% lived independently of their family. In comparison, 90% of non-offenders lived with their family and 10% lived independently.

Table 8.3 shows that non-offenders were more likely to have a family home where their biological parents lived together (76%), than offenders (39%). Only 7% of non-offenders mentioned a step-parent compared to 34% of offenders.

Table 8.3: Who lives in the Family Home (N=86)

	Offenders (n=56)	Non-Offenders (n=30)
No family home	5%	0%
With Mother	20%	17%
Mother and Father	39%	76%
Mother and Step-father	25%	7%
Father and Step-mother	9%	0%
Two separate family homes	2%	0%

A significant difference between the two groups was evident when the number of siblings who also lived in the family home was compared. Forty three per cent of offenders had two or more siblings and 30% of offenders had only one sibling compared to 17% and 57% respectively, for non-offenders (Chi-square =7.44; df=2; p=0.024).

In order to assess the relationship between the participants and their parents, offenders who were in prison were asked if they had regular contact with their parents during their time in prison. There was no significant difference between the two offender groups as the majority answered affirmatively to this question. Ninety seven per cent of violent offenders and 94% of non-violent offenders said they had regular contact. At the nine month interview, all the offenders currently in prison, said they regularly were in contact with their family.

8.5.1.2 Family and Personal Problems (see Table 8.4)

Table 8.4 shows the percentage of participants who reported problems within their immediate family (parents and siblings). These were asked at both the follow-up interviews and only

encompassed the time period between the initial and the respective follow-up interview. For the three month interview, there were no significant differences between the two groups in terms of whether anyone in their family had suffered from any of the problems asked. However, at the nine month interview, two types of problem were significantly different between the offender and the non-offender group. Twenty six per cent of offenders had family members who had committed a crime compared to 7% of non-offenders (Chi-square=4.17; df=1; p=0.04) and 31% of offenders had family members who had socio-economic problems (for example, losing a job) compared to none of the non-offenders (Chi-square= 6.19; df=1; p=0.013).

Table 8.4: Family Problems Disclosed at both Follow-Up Interviews (N=86 and 68 respectively)

	Offenders (n=56)	**Non-Offenders (n=30)**	**Offenders (n=38)**	**Non-Offenders n=30)**
	Three Month Interview		Nine Month Interview	
Criminality	21%	13%	26%	7%*
Psychiatric Problems	4%	0%	0%	0%
Drug Abuse	9%	0%	6%	0%
Alcohol Abuse	5%	10%	6%	0%
Partner Abuse	2%	0%	0%	0%
Socio-Economic Problems	19%	7%	31%	7%*

Note: Chi-square analysis
***df=1; p<0.05**

Offenders who had been released from prison before they were interviewed (n=17 for 3 month interview and n=27 for 9 month interview), were asked if they had experienced any problems since their release. These included, finding somewhere to live, drinking too much and avoiding turning to crime. Table 8.5 shows the percentages of people who reported having problems, although no significant differences were evident between the two groups.

Table 8.5 Problems Experienced Since Leaving Prison for both Follow-Up Interviews (N=17 and N=27 respectively)

	Violent Offenders (n=13)	Non-Violent Offenders (n=4)	Violent Offenders (n=17)	Non-Violent Offenders (n=10)
	Three Month Interview		Nine Month Interview	
Finding Somewhere to live	7%	0%	12%	20%
Getting a job	31%	50%	29%	40%
Getting into the wrong company	23%	25%	35%	20%
Drinking too much	8%	0%	29%	0%
Keeping away from drugs	15%	0%	41%	30%
Getting into trouble again	31%	25%	47%	30%
Getting on with family	15%	0%	18%	0%
Managing money	54%	100%	47%	10%
Turning to crime for money	7%	0%	17%	10%
Gambling	0%	0%	6%	0%

Table 8.5 shows that some people reported having difficulty finding a job after leaving prison. When the participants were asked at the three to four month interview if they had been employed since leaving prison, 50% of non-violent offenders and 71% of violent offenders said they were working or had worked since leaving prison. At the nine month interview, 70% of non-violent offenders said they had been working and 64% of violent offenders gave the same response.

8.5.2 Comparison of Delinquency during Lifetime (see Tables 8.6)

Offenders and non-offenders were compared to determine whether significant differences existed between the two groups for the delinquent acts committed during their lifetime (see Table 8.6).

Table 8.6: Comparison of Delinquent Behaviours Between Offenders and Non-Offenders for Lifetime (9 Month Interview, N=68)

Act	Offenders (n=38)	Non- Offenders (n=30)
Lied about age	92%	93%
Skipped classes	87%	90%
Cheated in tests	21%	23%
Suspended from school	79%	7%***
Avoided paying for fares etc	66%	33%**
Brought alcohol for a minor	71%	57%
Was drunk in public place	76%	53%*
Was loud in public place	74%	43%**
Begged for money from others	3%	0%
Took a car without permission	50%	10%***
Stole from institution	45%	7%***
Stole something between £5 and £50	87%	7%***
Stole from parents	24%	20%
Stole motor vehicle	66%	0%***
Handled stolen goods	79%	23%***
Run away from home	53%	0%***
Broke into buildings	84%	13%***
Damaged property belonging to family	24%	13%
Damaged property from institution	50%	7%***
Damaged other property	68%	27%***
Made obscene telephone calls	5%	0%
Set fire to buildings or property	21%	3%*
Carried a weapon	68%	7%***
Thrown objects	50%	20%**
Involved in gang fighting	76%	23%***
Hit adult in institution	42%	3%***
Hit Parents	29%	17%
Hit someone their own age	97%	77%**
Used Force to get something from someone their age	21%	3%*
Used force to get something from adult in institution	3%	0%
Used force to get something from other	26%	0%*
Attacked someone	34%	0%***
Had sexual relations with someone against their will	3%	0%

Sold cannabis	50%	13%**
Sold hard drugs	32%	0%***
Used alcohol	97%	100%
Took drugs	82%	57%*

Note: Chi-square analysis:
*** df=1; p<0.05**
****df=1; p<0.01**
*****df=1; p<0.001**

Table 8.6 highlights that with the exception of mainly status crimes; lying about their age, cheating on school tests, skipping classes and drinking alcohol (none of these were significantly different), the offenders were more likely to commit the delinquent acts during their lifetime than the non-offenders.

Although the comparisons carried out were made between the offender and non-offender groups, it is also worth mentioning where differences existed between the two offender groups (these differences have not been tabulated). Only four of these analyses were significant; stole motor vehicle (Chi-square= 4.53; df=1; p=0.03), hit an adult in an institution (Chi-square= 4.66; df=1; p=0.03), hit a parent (Chi-square=7.14; df=1; p=0.007) and used force to get something form someone their own age (Chi-square=4.67; df=1; p=0.03). In all of these cases, a higher percentage of violent offenders reported committing these acts than non-violent offenders.

8.5.3 Comparison of the Frequency and Severity of Delinquent Acts During Lifetime (see Table 8.7).

Although, the above shows significant differences between the groups in terms of the types of delinquent acts committed, this has only been analysed on a yes or no basis. It is however also important to assess whether the various groups who have committed the same types of delinquent acts, have exhibited these to the same extent and to the same degree of seriousness. The data was therefore re-analysed and Table 8.7 shows the mean scores for each group based on weightings for seriousness and frequency for each of the five subscales described in the method section;

Person, Property, Illegal, Public and Status.

Table 8.7: Mean Scores Based on Frequency and Seriousness Weightings for Collated Delinquency Subscales (9 month interview, N=68).

Subscale	Violent Offenders (n=26)	Non-Violent Offenders (n=12)	Non-Offenders (n=30)
PERSON	34.36	23.75	4.33**
PROPERTY	124.73	110.67	13.13**
ILLEGAL	13.77	19.17	4.96*
PUBLIC	49.31	44.67	14.90**
STATUS	29.84	26.75	19.13**

Note: ANOVA analysis:
*** df=2; p<0.001**
****df=2; p<0.0001**

Further analysis by t-tests between the different groups showed that significant differences occurred between non-offenders and violent offenders and non-offenders and non-violent offenders for; crimes against the person (t-test, t=-5.16; df=26.52; p<0.0001 and t=-2.42; df=11.60; p=0.03 respectively), crimes against property (t-test, t=-8.33; df=28.70; p<0.0001 and t= -5.63; df=11.96; p<0.0001 respectively), illegal service crimes (t-test, t=-3.37; df=29; p=0.002 and t=-3.17; df=11.57; p=0.008 respectively and public crimes (t-test, t=-5.70; df=37.62; p<0.0001 and t=-5.33; df=40; p<0.0001 respectively). However, for status crimes, there was only a significant difference between non-offenders and violent offenders (t-test, t=-5.55; df=53; p<0.0001).

In all these comparisons, the offenders (both violent and non-violent) had a significantly higher mean weighted score than non-offenders. However, no differences existed between the two types of offenders for any of the offence categories. This means that violent offenders and non-violent offenders were not significantly different in the extent to which they committed delinquent acts or to the seriousness of these acts.

8.5.4 Weighted Life-Time Delinquency Scores Related to Personality, Background and Film Characteristics (see Tables 8.8, 8.9 and 8.10).

The weighted life-time delinquency scores were analysed in relation to some of the variables which had been significant in distinguishing offenders from non-offenders based on personality, family background and film characteristics (see Chapters 3, 4 and 6). This was to determine if there was a difference in the seriousness and frequency that delinquency was committed by people from all three groups dependent on these various characteristics. Table 8.8 shows that for the non-offenders, weighted scores for public disorder crimes were greater for those who came from a violent family (t-test, t=-3.02; df=27; p=0.005), those who liked violent films (t-test, t=-3.56; df=28; p=0.001) and those who had a higher level of moral development (t-test, t=-5.27; df=25.90;p<0.0001). Crimes against the person were committed with greater severity and frequency by non-offenders who identified with a good character in the film than those who identified with a bad character (t-test, t=-3.28; df=20.23; p=0.004).

Table 8.8: Mean Weighted Lifetime Delinquency Scores Related to Personality, Family Background and Film Characteristics for Non-Offenders (9 month interview, N=30).

Characteristic		Person	Property	Illegal	Public	Status
Family Violence	No	1.93	8.93	3.92	7.27**	18.00
	Yes	6.36	13.06	5.07	22.29	20.57
Adult Reading Age	No	5.75	8.88	4.00	12.75	19.38
	Yes	3.43	11.67	4.70	15.19	19.19
Moral Development	Immature	1.00	8.50	3.50	0.5**	22.50
	Mature	4.81	14.11	5.17	16.65	19.15
Like Violent Films	No	4.31	12.77	4.84	11.65**	19.31
	Yes	4.50	15.50	6.00	36.00	18.00
Identify with Film Character	Bad	0.86**	16.14	6.00	13.57	22.00
	Good	4.27	13.05	4.81	13.00	17.53

Note: T-Test Analysis
***p<0.05**
****p<0.01**

In contrast to the findings for non-offenders, Table 8.9 shows that only reading age was significantly able to distinguish non-violent offenders' delinquency scores for illegal service crimes. Non-violent offenders with an adult reading age were more likely to commit more frequent and serious crimes of this nature than non-violent offenders who did not have an adult reading age (t-test, t=-2.65; df=32.50; p=0.024).

Table 8.9: Mean Weighted Lifetime Delinquency Scores Related to Personality, Family Background and Film Characteristics for Non-Violent Offender (9 month interview, N=12)

Characteristic		Person	Property	Illegal	Public	Status
Family Violence	No	30.00	65.00	28.50	50.00	32.50
	Yes	22.50	119.80	17.30	43.60	25.60
Adult Reading Age	No	16.38	106.75	12.50*	38.50	57.00
	Yes	38.50	118.50	32.50	57.00	29.00
Moral Development	Immature	27.12	104.13	18.63	47.50	29.75
	Mature	20.50	72.00	27.50	48.50	18.00
Like Violent Films	No	27.30	102.00	17.10	44.90	25.00
	Yes	6.00	154.00	29.50	43.50	35.50
Identify with Film Character	Bad	20.00	86.75	18.25	44.50	26.25
	Good	28.00	112.33	19.00	40.33	28.00

Note: T-test Analysis
***p<0.05**
****p<0.01**

Finally, weighted delinquency scores for violent offenders could only be differentiated by the presence of family violence. Two different types of delinquency; property crimes (t-test, t=-3.25; df=21; p=0.004), and public disorder crimes (t-test, t=-2.25; df=21; p=0.035) were all committed with greater severity and frequency by violent offenders who came from violent families than by violent offenders who did not come from a violent family background (see Table 8.10).

Table 8.10: Mean Weighted Lifetime Delinquency Scores Related to Personality, Family Background and Film Characteristics for Violent Offenders (9 month interview, N=26)

Characteristic		Person	Property	Illegal	Public	Status
Family Violence	No	14.50	41.00**	4.00	23.25*	23.00
	Yes	34.68	143.84	16.00	55.58	31.00
Adult Reading Age	No	39.92	135.36	14.07	48.07	31.43
	Yes	28.33	112.35	13.42	50.75	27.82
Moral Development	Immature	31.57	121.30	18.10	51.90	29.40
	Mature	32.79	108.43	8.12	41.29	28.69
Like Violent Films	No	38.64	115.00	12.60	51.13	28.36
	Yes	28.91	138.00	15.36	46.82	31.73
Identify with Film Character	Bad	38.58	121.08	19.00	56.42	29.33
	Good	32.73	134.92	8.83	46.17	31.73

Note: T-test Analysis
***p<0.05**
****p<0.01**

8.5.5 Comparison of Delinquency Committed Between Interviews (see Tables 8.11 and 8.12)

8.5.5.1 Three to Four Month Interview

For the three month comparison, three of the ANOVA comparisons, illegal service crimes (ANOVA, F=10.27; df=2; p=0.0001), public disorder crimes (ANOVA, F=4.27; df=2; p=0.02) and status crimes (ANOVA, F=94.19; df=2; p<0.0001) showed a significant difference between offenders who had been inside prison for the whole time between interviews, offenders who had spent some time outside prison in that period and non-offenders (see Table 8.11).

Further t-test analyses showed that offenders inside prison scored significantly lower mean weighted scores than both offenders outside prison and non-offenders for illegal service crimes

(t-test, t=-2.72; df=18.06; p=0.01 and t=test, t=-4.32; df=36.15; p<0.0001 respectively) and status crimes (t-test, t=-6.37; df=16.55; p<0.0001 and t=-14.98; df=32.74; p<0.0001 respectively). This indicated that offenders outside prison and non-offenders carried out these crimes to a greater extent and severity than the offenders incarcerated for the whole follow-up period.

There was also a trend for offenders outside prison to commit more public disorder crimes than the offender group inside prison and the non-offender group (t-test, t=-1.94; df=20; p=0.06 for and t=-1.97; df=20.48; p=0.06 respectively). This latter comparison was the only difference between the offenders released from prison at some period during follow-up and the non-offenders, although it just missed significance at the 0.05 level.

Table 8.11: Mean Weighted Scores for Offence Categories at Three/Four Month Interview for Offenders who had Been Inside or Outside Prison and Non-Offenders (N=86)

Category	Offenders Inside (n=39)	Offenders Outside (n=17)	Non-Offenders (n=30)
Person	2.69	6.77	2.69
Property	5.00	20.29	5.23
Illegal	0.31	3.00	3.17**
Public	12.38	26.24	12.10*
Status	0.67	17.47	21.60**

Note: ANOVA analysis
*** p<0.05**
**** p<0.001**

8.5.5.2 Nine to Ten Month Interview

For the nine to ten month comparison of the five crime categories, four of the ANOVA's were significant across the three groups (ANOVA, F=5.33; df=2; p=0.007 for person, F=5.68; df=2; p=0.005 for property, F=14.06; df=2; p<0.0001 for public and F=37.37; df=2; p<0.00001 for

status). However, the illegal crime category produced a trend (ANOVA, F=2.82; df=2; p=0.06). (see Table 8.12).

Two patterns of results were given by the t-test analyses. Firstly, person, property and public crimes were committed to a greater extent and severity by offenders outside prison than both offenders inside prison for the whole time period and non-offenders (t-test, t=-2.95; df=28.07; p=0.006 and t=2.59; df=30.64; p=0.014 respectively for person; t=-2.85; df=2.38; p=0.008 and t=2.71; df=26.33; p=0.012 respectively for property and t=-4.08; df=32.34; p<0.0001 and t=4.50; df=37.16; p<0.0001 respectively for public).

Secondly, in contrast to the above, illegal and status crimes were committed to a greater extent and severity by both offenders outside prison and non-offenders than by offenders incarcerated for the whole follow-up period (t-test, t=-2.58; df=29.56; p=0.015 and t=-2.56; df=32.79; p=0.015 respectively for illegal and t=-8.17; df=36; p<0.0001 and t=-6.37; df=16.55; p<0.0001 respectively for status).

Table 8.12: Mean Weighted Scores for Offence Categories at Nine/Ten Month Interview for Offenders who Had Been Inside or Outside Prison and Non-Offenders (N=68).

Category	Offenders Inside (n=12)	Offenders Outside (n=26)	Non-Offenders (n=30)
Person	0.82	6.58	1.47**
Property	1.09	37.52	2.87**
Illegal	0.55	5.93	2.63
Public	7.64	34.67	9.77***
Status	1.45	22.63	22.50***

Note: ANOVA analysis
*** Trend p=0.06**
****p<0.01**
*****p<0.0001**

8.5.6 Comparison of Pre-Interview and Post- Interview Delinquency (see Table 8.13)

The age of the participants when they committed the various items on the delinquency questionnaires was asked during the interview to determine whether the behaviour had occurred before the offender was interviewed (before they had been in prison) and whether they had acted like that after the interview (when released from prison or while they were still incarcerated).

This was determined only on a yes and no basis using the weighted score on seriousness for the five offence categories as it was not possible to compare the frequency due to the different time scales. As before, offenders were divided into those who had been outside prison for some time between the interviews and those who spent the whole time period between interviews inside prison.

Table 8.13: Comparison of Offenders' Pre and Post-Film Interview Delinquent Behaviours based on Weightings for Seriousness (9 month interview, N=38).

	Offenders (Outside Prison, n=26)		Offenders (Inside Prison, n=12)	
	Pre	**Post**	**Pre**	**Post**
Person	13.00	5.11**	13.70	3.30**
Property	43.68	14.46**	40.30	0.80**
Illegal	4.11	2.11*	4.00	1.50*
Public	15.59	11.96**	15.10	5.40**
Status	10.29	4.82**	9.90	0.60**

Note: Paired T-test Analyses:
*** p<0.01**
****p<0.001**

Table 8.13 above highlights that offenders, both who had spent all their time in prison and those who had been released in the time period between interviews, had significantly lower mean delinquency scores after the interview. This suggests that they had committed more acts with

higher seriousness weightings before being sent to prison than after they had been incarcerated and released or while they were still in prison.

8.6 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Hypothesis 1 that offenders will be significantly more likely to report family problems than non-offenders at the follow-up interviews was not upheld for the three to four month interview as no significant differences were evident between offenders and non-offenders. However, this hypothesis is partially upheld for the nine to ten month interview as offenders were more likely to have family members involved in criminality and who had socio-economic problems than non-offenders.

With reference to Hypothesis 2 that offenders will score higher delinquency scores based on weightings for seriousness and frequency than non-offenders throughout their Lifetime, this hypothesis can be upheld, as for all of the five subscales of offence types, offenders were significantly more likely to commit these crimes to a greater extent and severity than non-offenders over their Lifetime.

Hypothesis 3, that offenders will score higher delinquency scores based on weightings for seriousness and frequency than non-offenders over the three to four month follow-up period cannot be upheld for the comparison between offenders outside of prison and non-offenders as only a trend was evident for public disorder crimes, or for offenders inside prison and non-offenders. In fact, non-offenders scored higher illegal and status crimes than offenders in the latter comparison.

Hypothesis 4, that offenders will score higher delinquency scores based on weightings for seriousness and frequency than non-offenders over the nine to ten month follow-up period, can be partially upheld for the comparison between offenders outside prison and non-offenders. Offenders carried out crimes against the person, against property and public disorder to a greater

extent than non-offenders during the nine to ten month period. However, in a comparison of offenders inside prison and non-offenders, the hypothesis is rejected as there were no significant differences for three of the crime categories and as above, non-offenders actually scored higher for certain types of delinquency (illegal service and status crimes) than offenders in prison for the whole nine to ten month period.

8.7 DISCUSSION

8.7.1 The Influence of Family Circumstances

The findings related to who lived in the family home replicate those in Chapter 3 that offenders are more likely to have step-parents and are less likely to say that their mother and father live together in their family home than non-offenders. This is consistent with previous research which links broken homes and delinquency (Rankin, 1983). However, this link is not thought to be caused by the absence of a biological parent or the presence of a step-parent. Instead, it has been claimed that it is the result of discord within the home prior to the breakup as the effect on delinquency is greater in homes of divorced parents than when there has been a death of a parent (Blackburn, 1993).

Family problems were also looked at, but unfortunately this was only examined for the follow-up period interview and a more accurate picture could have been achieved if the same question was asked over the lifetime of the participant. Nevertheless, at the nine to ten month interview, offenders were significantly more likely to have a family member who was involved in criminality or who had socio-economic problems (such as losing a job). Both these factors were identified in the Cambridge Study as predictors of later delinquency when the participants were followed-up from 8 to 10 years (Farrington, 1995).

Chapter 3 described how the social learning of violence can take place within the family home.

However, research has shown that learning from parental figures can be extended to other types of criminal activities outside the confines of the home. "Parental figures were also found to indulge in the misuse of drugs and alcohol, further increasing the risk of the child's adoption of dysfunctional behaviour" (Falshaw and Browne, 1997, p.453).

This learning of criminality is not thought to be a straightforward vicarious modelling process which is more evident for the learning of violent behaviour from familial members. It is instead claimed to be more generally learnt through the legitimising of offending by family models and favourable attitudes towards offending and less favourable attitudes to societal laws (Farrington, 1995). However, this does not imply that all individuals from such vulnerable families become delinquents in the same way that not all children of violent parents become violent themselves due to the interplay of protective factors (see Farrington, 1995 for extended discussion).

Socio-economic problems within families have also been seen as predictors of delinquency, although again this is not a straightforward relationship. Social deprivation was noted in the introduction of this chapter as being related to the number of convictions by participants in a study in Newcastle (Kolvin et al. 1988). However, this could be for a number of reasons such as young people turning to crime to gain what they cannot afford legally or it could be that the strain of poverty impoverishes relationships between family members leading to marital disharmony or abusive parent and child interactions.

8.7.2 The Continuation of Antisocial and Delinquent Behaviours

In line with West and Farrington's (1977) research, this chapter shows that offenders are significantly more likely to have carried out a variety of delinquent and antisocial acts to a greater extent and severity throughout their Lifetime than non-offenders. This includes acts such as cheating at school, truancy, drinking as well as the criminal acts of taking drugs, stealing, breaking into buildings, violent offences and selling drugs.

These differences were also apparent when the groups were compared for the nine to ten month post-interview period for offenders who had been outside prison. In line with this was the lack of significance between offenders who were incarcerated for the whole follow-up period and non-offenders for person, property and public disorder crimes. This would suggest that non-offenders are only committing these crimes at a low level in line with the level being committed by those in prison who have limited means of committing such acts. Nevertheless, for illegal service and status crimes is does have to be remembered that non-offenders carried out these to a greater extent than offenders in prison, although this could be due to the fact that these encompassed skipping classes and cheating on tests which offenders in prison were unable to do.

Interestingly, the comparison of the delinquency scores for offenders before and after their time in prison showed that for all types of delinquent sub-categories, the offenders decreased in their severity of offending. This was upheld for both offenders who had been released from prison and for those who remained in prison throughout the follow-up period. This could be interpreted as prison being a deterrent for people committing crimes to the same extent as they did prior to incarceration. However, it has to be remembered that only a certain time period is involved and a more extended longitudinal study may provide different results.

8.7.3 Delinquency Related to Personality, Background and Film Characteristics

The results from the analysis which examined weighted delinquency scores for the three groups in relation to personality, background and film characteristics showed that in the majority of instances, these factors were undifferentiated by the severity and frequency of delinquent acts committed. Nevertheless, family violence still appeared to be an influential factor for committing public and property crimes by non-offenders and violent offenders. In addition, non-offenders who liked violent films also scored higher on public disorder crimes. This may reflect that non-offenders need to share similar characteristics to offenders (who have also been shown to come from violent families and have a preference for violent films) before they commit more frequent and severe crimes of this nature.

It could argued that the findings which showed that non-offenders who identified with a 'good' character in the film committed more frequent and serious crimes against the person than those identifying with the 'bad guy', are in line with the research carried out by Wilson et al. (1995). They state that the lack of punishment of the good guy in the film means that people are encouraged to identify with these characters, who are violent, but are portrayed as being justified to act in this way. Findings from Chapter 6 support this, as offenders were significantly more likely to identify with the 'bad guy' than non-offenders who were thus, identifying with this 'good' but violent character.

A final point to be made about these findings is that non-offenders who were at a higher moral development stage committed more severe and frequent public disorder crimes, although this may be due to those people with a higher moral development actually admitting that they commit these crimes more, than those with a lower morality.

In conclusion, this chapter had identified that some of the predictors of delinquency highlighted by Farrington (1995) significantly differentiate offenders from non-offenders. In addition, it has also been shown that offenders are, in general, more antisocial and delinquent than non-offenders during their Lifetime which provides evidence for the theory that people who become offenders can be classed as having an underlying 'antisocial tendency' (Farrington, 1995).

Furthermore, these findings validate the particular groups used for comparison within this thesis. This is important to establish as previously the groups could only be based on officially recorded crimes. Therefore, it was unknown if the non-offenders were committing delinquent acts and crimes to the same extent as the offenders, but not getting caught. It can now be said that non-offenders were representing a sample significantly distinct from offenders based on the delinquency and crimes they had committed.

8.8 SUMMARY

All types of delinquent behaviours have been shown to be far more common amongst the offenders in this study than the non-offenders. Although it does appear that these behaviours significantly decrease while the offender is in prison and on release from prison.

The following chapter is a discussion of the thesis as a whole which draws together the findings from the previous chapters in an attempt to describe the exact nature of the relationship between offending behaviour, family background, personality and violent film viewing.

CHAPTER 9: GENERAL DISCUSSION

9.1 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

This thesis has investigated the effects of video violence with specific emphasis on its differential influence on young offenders and non-offenders. The main findings were that young offenders significantly differed in personality characteristics and family background than non-offenders. Offenders were more likely to have lower intelligence, were less likely to be empathetic, have a lower moral development, have higher aggressive tendencies and come from violent families, than non-offenders.

In addition, offenders differed from non-offenders in aspects related to violent films. When questioned, offenders were more likely to show a preference for violent films in general, name an actor, predominantly associated with violent roles, as their favourite and identify with a "bad guy" in a specific violent film up to ten months after initially viewing the film, than non-offenders. Findings from the direct observation of participants whilst viewing a violent film, showed that offenders also significantly differed in their behavioural responses depicting interest and approval to violent aspects of the film from non-offenders, but not from non-violent aspects of the same film.

9.2 ASSESSING THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE MAIN FINDINGS ON OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR

In order to understand all these various findings in relation to each other and more importantly in relation to their importance on offending behaviour a discriminant function analysis was undertaken in preparation for a report to the Home Office (Browne and Pennell, 1998; see

Appendix VIII). The results have been discussed here as they relate to a number of chapters and therefore it was not possible to single out one relevant chapter previously for the insertion and examination of these findings.

Because the offender and non-offender groups used in this analysis were composed of a similar number of individuals, an "equal priors" discriminant function analysis was performed by both, full and step-wise methods. Table 9.1 presents the standardised canonical discriminant function coefficients for the full method, which reflect the degree to which each characteristic (or factor) can explain the difference between the offender and non-offender groups, taking any cross-correlations into account. Characteristics were entered into the analysis on the basis that they were theoretically important and significantly associated with offending behaviour.

Table 9.1: Discriminant function analysis - characteristics that significantly differentiate between offender and non-offender samples (in order of relative importance for distinguishing between the two samples).

	Standardised canonical discriminant function coefficients
Physical Confrontational Thoughts (NAS)	0.8520
Step-father Present (previous family breakdown)	0.7087
High Trait Anger (STAXI)	0.6600
Low Level of Moral Development	0.4906
Low Empathy Score (IRI)	0.4581
Parental Violence to Young Person	0.3922
Low Intellectual Ability	0.3569
Preference for Violent Films	0.2745
Young Person Violent to Parents	0.1876
Young Person Witness Spouse Violence	0.1751
Favourite Actor plays Violent Roles	0.1682
Identification with 'Bad Guy' in Film	0.0773
Film Lacks Violent Action	0.0767
Poor Reading Ability	0.0759
Violent Reason for Remembering Actor in Film	0.0165

Fifteen characteristics were identified and based on the size of the coefficient value, were placed theoretically in order of relative importance of their ability to classify participants as offenders or non-offenders. Use of the step-wise analysis produced broadly similar results, confirming that the most important characterisations were: Physical Confrontational Thoughts (as measured on the Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale, including items such as "I have had to be rough with people who bothered me" and "When I get mad, I can easily hit someone"); Step-father Present (previous family breakdown); Parental Violence to Young Person; Low Level of Moral Development; and High Trait Anger (STAXI).

The predictive ability of the model yielded a sensitivity of 92% and a specificity of 100%, with an overall correct classification rate of 95.8% (see Table 9.2). These impressive figures require caution in their interpretation as the sample sizes were small (N=48). The analysis only works for those participants who have a complete set of information for every characteristics in the model, hence the reduced sample size. Nevertheless, it can be tentatively concluded that the characteristics in Table 9.1, when considered together, are able to classify individuals into offender and non-offender groups.

Table 9.2: Predicted Accuracy of Characteristics Associated with Offenders by Discriminant Function Analysis*.

Group	**No of Cases**	**Predicted Group membership**	
		Offender	**Non-Offender**
Offender	25	23 (92%)	2 (8% missed cases)
Non-offender	23	0 (0%)	23 (100% correctly specified)

*Percent of "grouped" cases correctly classified: 95.8%

The findings of the discriminant function analysis showed that factors linked to film violence help to distinguish offenders from non-offenders. However, compared to factors such as family violence and breakdown, thoughts of physical confrontation, low moral development, lack of empathy for others and low intellectual ability, the contribution of violent- film related factors was small. Therefore, the analysis demonstrated that personality and the social background of young people was more important in the identification of those who commit offences than aspects of violent film.

9.3 WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FINDINGS OF THIS THESIS IN RELATION TO EXISTING RESEARCH ON FILM VIOLENCE?

This thesis has tested hypotheses constructed on the basis of existing research within the field of film and media violence and more specifically on young offenders within this area. It would therefore, be of relevance to discuss the findings of this study, emphasising their significance within the broader context of this existing research.

9.3.1 Establishing a Model of Direction

One way this can be achieved is to utilise previous research findings together with the results of this study to establish a model. Although the discriminant function analysis has identified the factors important in distinguishing offenders from non-offenders it has not implied direction of effect. Therefore, by comparing this study's results to previous findings it is possible to provide a theoretical model of direction for offending behaviour in relation to personality characteristics, family background and having a preference for violent films which have all been implicated as successfully classifying offenders and non-offenders within the sample. Based on this study's findings that individuals from violent backgrounds are more vulnerable to offending behaviour and a preference for violent films, but this may be modified by personality and moral values, the following theoretical model is proposed (Fig. 9.1).

Figure 9.1: A Tentative Model for the Development of Preferences for Violent Film.

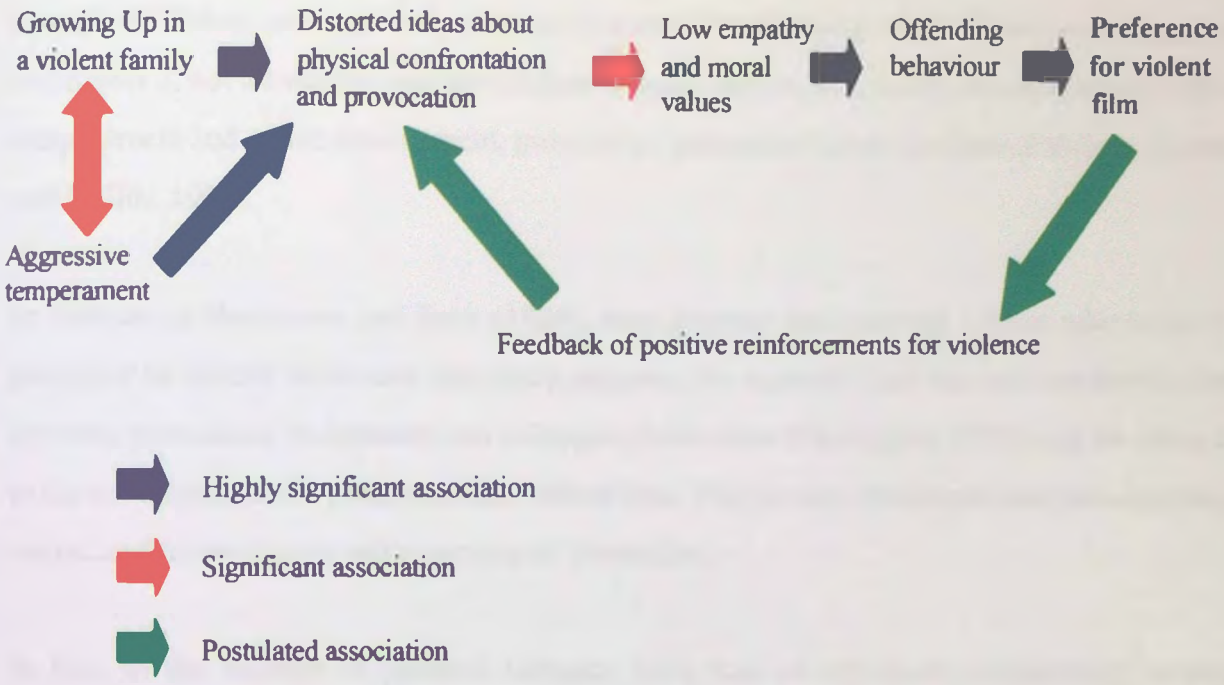


Figure 9.1 is based on the findings of this study that a history of family violence, distorted thoughts about physical confrontation, low empathy and poor moral development are associated directly or indirectly with offending and a preference for violent films. It is argued that, as a result of a young person growing up in a violent family, they are more likely to witness, be victims of and perpetrate aggressive acts after seeing real violence in the home environment. This experience is likely to occur prior to an interest in television and film (Browne and Herbert, 1997). This was shown in Chapter 3 where significantly more violent offenders came from a violent family background than non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

9.3.2 The Influence of Parental Violence

This 'victim to offender' concept as a consequence of child physical and emotional maltreatment is well established, as shown in the relevant literature (see Browne, 1993). However, as discussed in Chapter 3, not all victims become offenders, partly due to personality characteristics, such as temperament and moral development, providing a protective barrier for them (Falshaw, Browne and Hollin, 1996).

In contrast to Huesmann and Eron (1986), who propose that viewing violent television is a precursor to violent behaviour, this study suggests the opposite: that the well-established link between poor social background and delinquent behaviour (Farrington, 1995) may be extended to the development of a preference for violent film. This in turn, reinforces distorted cognitions about conflict resolution and responses to frustration.

In fact, in the absence of parental violence there was no significant relationship between offending and a preference for violent film and violent characters. However, when parental violence was present, there were significant differences between offenders and non-offenders, with offenders being more likely to show a distinct preference for violent film and violent characters (see Figs. 4.4 and 4.5). This indicates that both a history of family violence and offending behaviour are necessary conditions for an individual to develop a significant preference for violent scenes and violent role models in film entertainment, although it seems that only a history of offending is required to show a greater preference for police dramas and serials (see Fig. 4.1).

These findings are also consistent with the conclusions drawn from Heath et al.'s (1986) study that high exposure to television in childhood is related to committing a violent crime later, only if violence is present in the home. There was no such association if there was an absence of parental violence. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, it does have to be remembered that the measure used in Heath et al.'s (1986) study was television viewing, in general, rather then specifically the viewing of violent television.

A further extension to the argument that family violence and having an aggressive temperament must be placed before watching violent films as contributory factors to offending behaviour is due to findings of other research which implicate this specific chronological order. Huesmann et al. (1984) states that the propensity for aggression is evident at an early age within the child and it has been claimed from Farrington's (1991) study that the learning of aggression through parent and child interactions occurs early. Further evidence for the occurrence of family violence in early childhood is that over three quarters of physical abuse in the family which results in death or handicap occurs before the child is aged 5 years (Browne and Herbert, 1997).

Claims from Messaris (1986) also indicate that the proposed model is accurate in the sequential order it is presented in. It is suggested that children will not imitate behaviours from television unless they are previously encouraged to engage in these types of behaviours. Therefore, being aggressive as a result of viewing television violence will depend on what the child has learnt from their relationships with their parents. Indeed, this learning through parental and child interactions is seen as a prerequisite.

This is further demonstrated by claims that in the same way that family violence has a critical period (before the child is aged 5 years) so there is a critical time for television violence having a maximal effect on a child. There is some variation in the decision as to the exact age, although the age band when exposure to screen violence is seen as most influential is between 8 and 12 years (Eron, 1982). Thus, the child may already be witnessing or experiencing violence from their parents before they have reached the age where television violence is seen as a crucial influence.

Therefore, the role of the parent in the development of anti-social behaviour in young people should not be under-estimated. Plate 1 (see p. 229) is photographic evidence, from New Scotland Yard's Black Museum, which gives an example of an 8-year old's imitation of an age-inappropriate video film where the parents had allowed their son to view sexually violent material (Ross, 1997 pers. comm). This constitutes parental neglect which is highly associated with family violence (Browne and Herbert, 1997) and which, in turn is highly associated with being an offender and expressing a preference for violent film.

9.3.3 The Influence of Personality Characteristics

Although, the role of the family is undeniable, the model has also incorporated individual personality characteristics which are significantly visible in the proposed relationship between offending and violent film preferences. This is discussed by Gauntlett (1995) in his conclusions drawn from Lynn et al.'s (1989) study of aggressive behaviour in children in Northern Ireland; "the findings do however provide strong support for the view that particular personality traits- whether produced by nature or nurture- are responsible for higher levels of both aggression and the enjoyment of television violence" (Gauntlett 1995; p.30).

It is not within the specific research aims of this thesis to argue as to the extent that these personality characteristics are due to nature or nurture. This is demonstrated by the use of a bi-directional arrow in the model between growing up in a violent family and having an aggressive temperament (see Fig. 9.1). Instead, this thesis is making the point that these characteristics are highly influential in the development of offending behaviour, the expressed preference for violent films and the impact of watching films of this nature.

Bailey (1993) claims that young offenders are driven by distorted ideas which leads to them perceiving screen violence in an abnormal way. Such distortions can include low moral values and a lack of empathetic concern held by the individual. Both of which have been shown in this thesis to be more evident in offenders than non-offenders which is consistent with published research (see Eisenberg-Berg and Mussen, 1978; Thornton and Reid, 1982; Kaplan and Arbuthnot, 1985).

These personality characteristics can be learnt through poor socialization practices, as for example, children of morally undeveloped parents often only digest and reflect their parent's low moral evaluations (Vine, 1994). This, he proposed has dangerous implications for the varying influential nature of violent screen images in different audiences due to the following argument, "moral commitments rather than violent stimuli can come to play the most critical causal role of all in determining responses to screen representations of violence" (p.17). This claim is

significant for the findings in this study as offenders did show a significant preference for violent screen images and were significantly more likely to have a lower level of moral development as discussed above (measured by the Social Reflection Questionnaire, see Chapter 3).

9.3.4 The Differential Influence of Film

Despite it being beyond the scope of the current project to prove conclusively whether video violence causes crime, the findings do show that when factors associated with offending such as growing up in a violent family, aggressive personality, distorted cognitions about conflict resolution, lack of empathy and morals are present in an individual, a liking of violent films can identify those who commit offences. However, no firm conclusions about how this contributes to crime can be made without examining the future offending behaviour of those who identify with violent film.

Evidence for the imitation of violent characters in film, which has led on to aggressive acts and criminal proceedings does exist (see Plate 2, p.229). For example, a research visit to the Black Museum at New Scotland Yard by the author, revealed a photograph of a glove shown in Plate 2 which has Stanley knife blades attached to it at the end of each of the fingers and thumb. A seventeen year old man was found with this glove in his possession in August 1987. He was arrested in his car where he appeared to be trying to hide the weapon. The young man was fined for possessing an offensive weapon and the mitigation for his defence was that he was inspired by the "Nightmare on Elm Street" films (Cert. 18), where the main character "Freddie Kruger" uses a similar weapon to attack his victims. Although there was blood (not the suspect's own) on the glove, the young man was never charged with any further offences as no victims or witnesses came forward (Ross, 1997; pers com).

Plate 1: Photograph of an 8 Year Old's Imitation of a Weapon Shown in an Age-Inappropriate Video Film

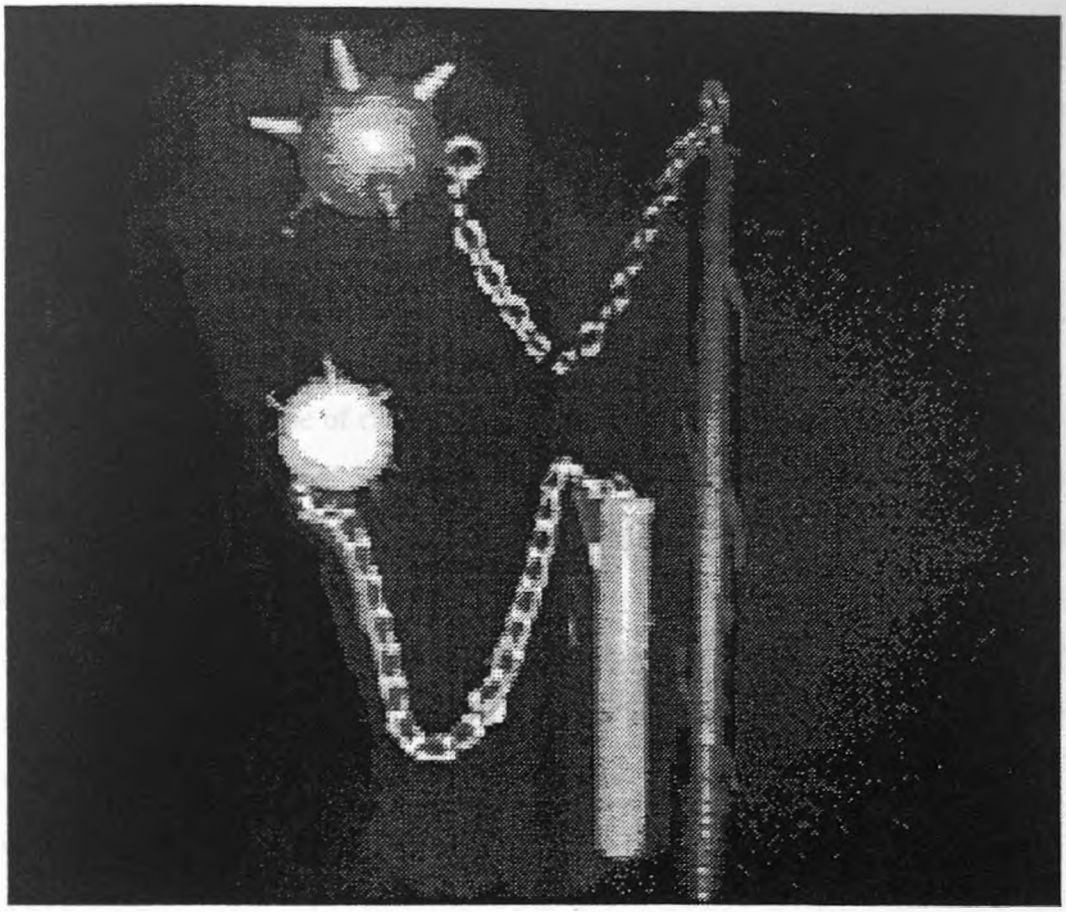
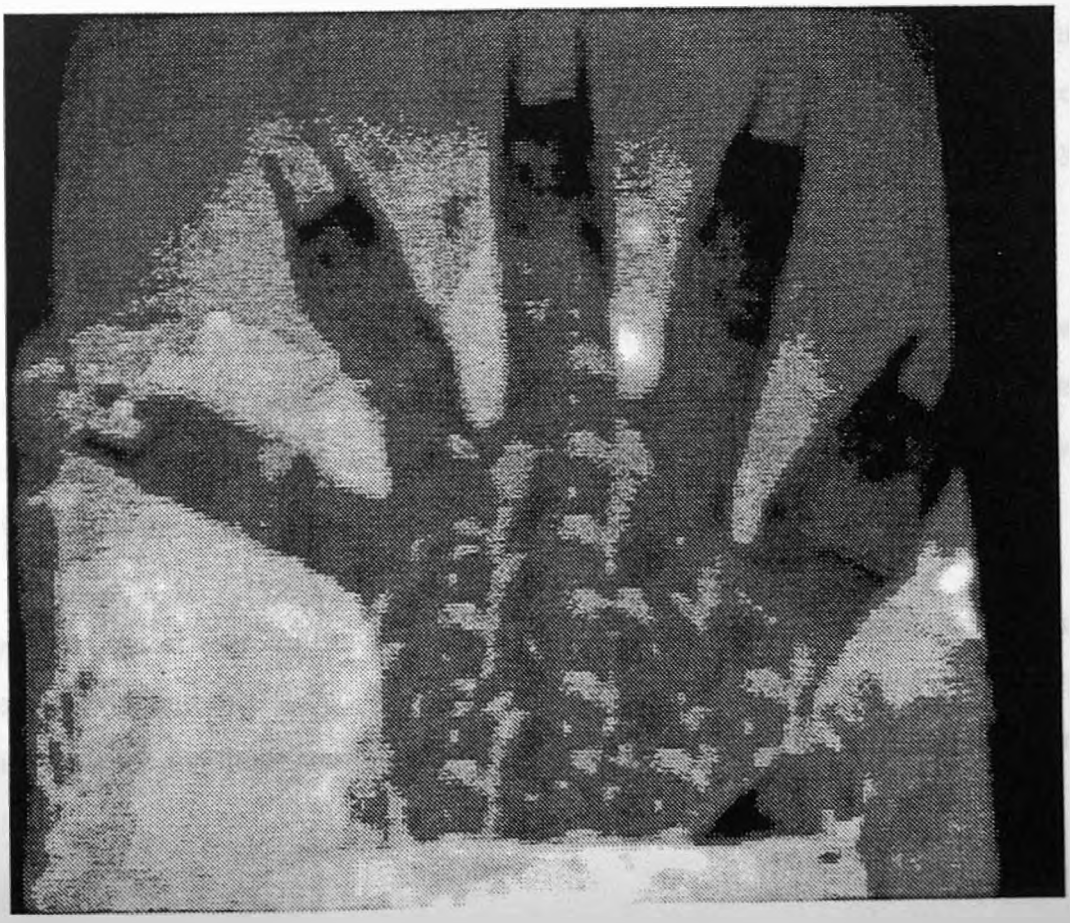


Plate 2: Photographic Evidence of Direct Imitation from a Violent Film



However, evidence of such direct imitation from films and videos, called 'copy-catting', is rare and it is assumed that, if there is any influence, it is more indirect for the vast majority of individuals. Where evidence of direct imitation from violent film has been observed, the individual concerned is most likely already to have developed a tendency to behave in a violent manner.

This has been exemplified by the use of case studies based on psychiatrists' notes and provides some evidence for the realistic notion of there being some form of 'feedback loop' which has only been postulated in the model (Fig. 9.1). This has been discussed from the point of view of young people who were under tension and for who a violent video acted as a catalyst for lowering their impulse control to commit violent acts. "The behaviour was sudden, often of short duration and consequent on the video seen. It seems obvious from these cases that a combination of current tension and violent video viewing can combine and lead to compulsive acts of violence" (Melville-Thomas and Sims, 1985, p.118).

Thus, for individuals under stress, with limited impulse control, violent images on the screen can act as a suggestive influence which over-rides their normal tendency to control their predisposition to be aggressive. " Based on the small number of cases described, it would seem likely that the future effects of such material would be to increase crimes of violence since individuals with poor impulse control, even while still in adolescence or childhood, have already been 'influenced to copy the film'" (Melville-Thomas and Sims, 1986, p.119).

Thus, viewing violent films has the differential ability to influence; it may desensitise those without violent tendencies to tolerate higher levels of violence in their environment, whereas people with violent tendencies may increase their behavioural repertoire of aggressive behaviour by imitating what they see.

Hill (1997) perhaps, theorises this differential impact in the most concise way by reference to the notion of 'portfolios of interpretation'. These 'portfolios' contain a collection of experiences (such as family violence and those learnt through socialization practices) which help the viewer

to interpret the violence seen on the screen and aided by a combination of individual and contextual factors, are used to create a response. They are "the means with which to experience viewing violence" (p.108) and signify the uniqueness of individuals' responses to the same visual stimulus. The most important conclusion therefore, to be drawn from the findings of this thesis is "there is no one response to viewing violence, but varieties of response which are activated by the consumer not by the movies themselves (Hill, 1997; p.113).

9.4 THE WAY FORWARD: SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this study had offered a different approach to studying the impact of violent films on young offenders and has attempted to explore the area from a number of different perspectives, there are always suggestions of further research to be made, based on the findings currently presented. These also provide an opportunity to advise where current methodological limitations may be overcome.

One of the most important considerations for this is that the research was carried out on young male offenders and non-offenders as it was not possible within the time and design of this study to examine the influence of film violence on females. Research into violence per se amongst females has become an area where interest is ever-growing and it would be of value to repeat or carry out a similar study on a female population employing the use of female young offenders and non-offenders.

Research has been carried out by Schlesinger, Dobash, Dobash and Weaver (1992) in 'Women Viewing Violence', but Hill (1997) suggests that the question of whether woman actually enjoy watching violence has still been left answered. It would also be of interest to explore the process of identification with female characters by a female audience particularly as women's roles in films are becoming more violent. This could not be achieved in the current study as different films would be required for each gender sample so that women could be given the chance to identify with a violent female film role model. Thus, the films utilised for such a study would

have a female actress in the lead role, in order to be comparative with this research investigation.

Unfortunately, similar constraints meant that racial differences in the influence of film violence could also not be studied. All participants were Caucasian to avoid the confounding influence of race on the identification with film characters occurring. It would, however, be of interest to look at this issue in a further study.

A final ramification of using the particular sample studied, was that the results were based on responses by young offenders who had been convicted and imprisoned for their offences. As discussed in Chapter 3, studies of detected offenders may not validly represent all offenders in general, with particular reference to those offenders who are never caught.

In addition, the results from this aspect of the study can only describe the influence of violent films on the immediate behaviour of the participants (short-term). A more in-depth study would be to look at the long-term effects on a viewer's behaviour especially in relation to imitation from film, as children have been shown to imitate behaviours up to 8 months after viewing them (Hicks, 1965). The problem is to identify which of the many films watched over a period of time, is most strongly influencing behaviour.

It was originally suggested to have a "behavioural book" within the secure institutions to see if the films had any influence on displayed behaviour in the time period succeeding the initial viewing of the film. However, this proved too difficult to maintain for two reasons; firstly, it was difficult for the staff in the secure units to consistently carry out these observations to be used for scientific purposes and secondly, it would have been much harder to establish in a school setting so there would be no comparison data. For these reasons the idea was rejected and the behavioural responses used for analysis were limited to the immediate. It could therefore be recommended that future research incorporates some method to carry out this suggestion of examining the more prolonged effects of viewing film violence on actual behaviour displayed, although the difficulties in doing this have been outlined above.

9.5 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of this research have shown that victims of family violence are more likely to be involved in criminal activity than those from non-violent homes. Furthermore, those individuals who commit offences show a greater preference for violent film entertainment and remember violent film characters more often up to ten months after viewing a video film. It can be argued that such preferences and memories for violent film reinforce distorted ideas about physical confrontation and the use of violence when provoked. Hence, the chances of committing a violent act increases which may lead to a greater frequency of aggressive incidences for individuals predisposed to violence. Therefore, one of the most important considerations from this thesis is the availability of violent images to those people who are already known to have committed violent acts (see Pennell and Browne (1998); Appendix IX).

9.5.1 Censorship and Control

It is recognised that the censorship and control of violent and sexual imagery in media entertainment is sensitive and controversial. Indeed, with the advent of the Internet it is difficult to filter out undesirable and disturbing images from the population as a whole. Therefore, in the community, restricting access to violent material to aggressively predisposed individuals is virtually impossible. However, this is not the case for those young offenders who have been placed in secure accommodation and young offender institutions where staff can exercise discretion over what the residents may watch. Indeed, the Secretary of State's Youth Treatment Service Group (Department of Health), chaired by Winifred Tumin, recommended in their Third Annual Report published in October 1995, " That steps be taken to review the amount of time spent by young people (in the secure centre) watching TV and, in particular, that a much greater degree of control be exercised over their access to inappropriate television programmes and videos". (p.18).

It was observed, whilst carrying out the research in two secure environments, that restrictions were placed on the times that young offenders could watch television and films due to the daily regime of the institution. However, there appeared to be relatively few restrictions on the material they viewed in terms of its content or whether it was age-appropriate. It was noted that in the institutions where the study took place, young offenders were watching satellite television or 'adult' video films (Cert.18) on the juvenile wings. However, the authors were pleased to note that this situation was rectified once the situation was brought to the attention of the staff.

Obviously, a balance has to be drawn between managing residents' behaviour by incentives (such as allowing an inmate to have greater access to television and choosing their own video films as a reward for good behaviour) and the adverse effect of viewing inappropriate material. Indeed, the general issue of the availability of unsuitable media entertainment seems to be a subject that has not been adequately thought through in most secure environments run by local authorities, the Department of Health and the Home Office Prison Service.

A justification for firm and clear recommendations on media entertainment for incarcerated young offenders is that aggressively predisposed individuals with violent childhoods are a 'vulnerable audience' to the effects of video and film violence. Therefore, allowing individuals with a record of violent acts to be 'entertained' by violent imagery may be counter-productive in that it may weaken any positive treatment effects of formal programmes, such as anger-management groups.

It could be argued that all violent screen imagery and explicit police dramas, even those that are age-appropriate, should be censored from this vulnerable group. This would safe-guard against such material reinforcing ideas on criminal acts, and the distorted thoughts about the use of violence already held, in those individuals predisposed to offending behaviour.

9.5.2 Education

An alternative is to educate rather than simply censor. Ideally, media education should begin in childhood and there is a need to teach parents that they are responsible for their child's mental, as well as physical, health and well-being and this includes age-appropriate viewing of television and video film in the home. In the school environment, violence on the screen can be critically appraised, in term of its realism, justification and consequences, under the guidance of a teacher.

Singer and Singer (1981) showed that by introducing a film curriculum into a school, children's knowledge of television increased through learning about camera techniques and editing processes. The children were thus able to create a better distinction between reality and fiction which is sometimes found difficult in young children. This type of educational programme known as the 'industry' curriculum (Dorr, Graves and Phelps, 1980) can be taken a step further to actually teach the evaluation of television content ('process' curriculum). These two curricula were used in association with a 'control' curriculum based on 'social reasoning and role taking. This study showed that children could learn more about television and apply this to the understanding and discussion of its content (Dorr, Graves and Phelps, 1980).

Such 'television literacy' studies have various goals which include making the child less influenced by what they see and in particular being less influenced by the 'bad' things they see (Gunter and McAleer, 1990). This obviously has implications for the utility and value of such educational programmes within the specific area of television violence. One study which explored this particular concept was carried out in the Netherlands by Vooijs and Van der Voort (1993). They implemented a critical viewing curriculum with the aim of teaching children to become "more discriminate consumers of violent crime series" (p.133).

The researchers wanted children to take violence on the screen more seriously, to be more questioning about the violence they saw and to make children aware of the differences between violence portrayed on the screen and real-life violence. In order to achieve these aims, televised interviews were shown which included police officers who had really shot someone in the line

of duty and victims of real-life violence. These could then be compared to the violence in the crime series to illustrate the degree of difference between fiction and reality.

The participants followed a five week teaching programme and were given a pretest, a post-test and a retest, which was administered two years after the initial testing had occurred. The results showed that children could be taught to be more critically evaluative of televised violence by taking it more seriously and to be less approving of the violence committed by the fictional 'good guys'. The latter of these two is an important factor to study as children often see the 'good guys' as doing no wrong (Van der Voort, 1986) which makes the approval of violence much easier to justify and thus encourages the viewer to identify with someone who is not punished for their violent behaviour (Wilson et al. 1995). The effects of this teaching curriculum were evident two years later as children's perceived reality of violent television was still demonstrated (Vooijs and Van der Voort, 1993).

In a similar manner to this, there are also educational implications for secure institutions as critical viewing skills for violent imagery need to be promoted to enable individuals with distorted cognitions about violence to understand the various concepts behind what they are watching. Media images, are therefore, a powerful medium with which to teach offenders the consequences of violence which are so often under-played in 'Hollywood Blockbusters'. This could be introduced as part of anger-management programmes or an equivalent programme to counteract the often detrimental 'education' that these vulnerable individuals have received through adverse experiences during their childhood and in their current lives.

CONCLUSIONS

Fewer differences emerged between violent offenders and non-violent offenders than between all offenders and non-offenders. With respect to this comparison, the results from the discriminant function analysis provide perhaps the best insight into the effects of film violence on young offenders.

It therefore appears that the key role is played by the family, as this seems to be the starting place for offending behaviour and a preference for film violence. As the results and the model (Fig. 9.1) have shown, there is a path from having a violent home life, to being an offender, to being more likely to prefer violent films. This is associated with cognitive distortions and low moral development, which may act as enhancers when present and protective mechanisms when absent. What this may suggest is that, in order to limit the effects of film violence, the prevalence of family violence needs to be reduced to lessen the development of the associated distorted cognitions and low moral values of those individuals involved.

This study does support the conclusion put forward by the UNESCO (1964) review that "television by itself cannot make a normal well-adjusted child into a delinquent" (p.14). This is a very important and valid conclusion which evidence from this study backs up. The effects of television and film violence are only one of a number of characteristics which distinguish offenders from non-offenders and, in terms of relative value, they are less important than personality and social background factors.

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APPENDIX I : CONSENT FORMS GIVEN TO ALL PARTICIPANTS

RESPONSES TO VIDEO FILM

Consent to Help in the Project

This project looks at young people's experiences of watching videos, but before you see the videos, but before you see the video, we want to ask you a few questions about your lifestyle and get you to fill in a questionnaire. This will take about half an hour. The video film will last one and a half hours, and the project worker will make notes on a computer about your reaction to the film.

After the film you will be asked your opinion of it and we will again get you to fill in a questionnaire. This will take another 45 minutes of your time. In total, your help in the video film project will last three hours on a Wednesday afternoon on your wing.

If you agree we would like to meet with you at 3 to 4 and 9 to 10 months after watching the video film, even if you have left the YOI, and again ask your opinion of the video.

All the information you give will not be identified with you in any way. However, if you tell us about an unknown criminal offence that places your own life or the life of others at risk, this information by law must be passed on.

At any time you may withdraw from the project or not help in the project at all. If you are willing to take part in this project, please sign below.

Name _____ **Date**_____

Signature _____

Amanda Pennell, Project Worker

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED IN INITIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW

The Children's Category Test
The Schonnel Reading Test
The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder
The Conflict Tactics Scale
The Novaco Reactions to Provocation Scale

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED IN FIRST INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Viewing Habits Interview
Interpersonal Reactivity Index
Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and
Anger Expression Scale

INTRODUCTORY INTERVIEW: VIEWING HABITS

1) Sample Number _____

2) Age in years and months _____ yrs _____ months

3) On average, how many days a week do you watch films on television ? (not including Satellite and Videos)

Never _____ Four days _____

One day _____ Five days _____

Two days _____ Six days _____

Three days _____ Seven days _____

4) How many hours a day on average do you think you watch films on television? (not including satellite and video)

one hour or less _____

over one hour up to two hours _____

over two hours up to three hours _____

over three hours up to four hours _____

over four hours up to five hours _____

over five hours up to six hours _____

over six hours _____

5) What time of the day do you most frequently watch films on television?

Before 10.00 am _____

Between 10.00am and 3.00pm _____

Between 3.00pm and 6.00pm _____

Between 6.00pm and 9.00pm _____

Between 9.00pm and 11.00pm _____

After 11.00pm _____

6) What are your favourite television programmes?

_____

_____

_____

7) What do you like about these particular programmes?

8) Do you have a television set in your own room?

yes _____ no _____

9) Do you have a video recorder in your own room?

yes _____ no _____

10) On average, how many days a week do you watch video films?

Never _____ Four days _____

One day _____ Five days _____

Two days _____ Six days _____

Three days _____ Seven days _____

11) How many hours a day on average do you think you watch video films?

one hour or less _____

over one hour up to two hours _____

over two hours up to three hours _____

over three hours up to four hours _____

over four hours up to five hours _____

over five hours up to six hours _____

over six hours _____

12) How many video films do you watch a week?

_____

13) When was the last time you watched a video film?

Today _____ This week _____

Yesterday _____ More than a week ago _____

14) What was the last video film you watched?

_____

15) What are your three favourite video films and how often have you watched these?

How often (e.g. once, twice)

Film one: _____ _____

Film two: _____ _____

Film three: _____ _____

16) What type of film do you most like watching and why?

17) Who are your favourite actors/actresses?

18) If you could be anyone in a film, who would you be and why?

19) Do you watch satellite/cable television? (**If no, go to question 25)**

yes _____ no _____

20) What is the last film you watched on satellite/cable television?

_____

21) On average, how many days a week do you watch films on satellite/cable television?

Never _____ four days _____

one day _____ five days _____

two days _____ six days _____

three days _____ seven days _____

22) How many hours a day on average do you think you watch films on satellite/cable television?

one hour or less _____

over one hour up to two hours _____

over two hours up to three hours _____

over three hours up to four hours _____

over four hours up to five hours _____

over five hours up to six hours _____

over six hours _____

23) What is your favourite film that you have seen on satellite/ cable television and why?

Film: _____

24) What film, in general, would you most like to see, but have not seen yet ?

_____

Why have you not seen this film and why would you like to see it?

25) Have you seen **Pulp Fiction** _____
Juice _____
No Surrender _____
Only The Strong _____
Reservoir Dogs_____
Natural Born Killers _____
Highway To Hell _____
Judge Dredd _____
South Central LA _____

26) All films are given a certificate which determines which age groups are allowed to see these films.

Do you think films should be given certificates? yes _____ no _____

27) Why do you think films are given these certificates?

28) What are the different certificates given to films?

29) What does a **15** certificate mean?

APPENDIX IV: OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF BEHAVIOURS USED IN DIRECT OBSERVATION

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Visual Behaviours:

Looks at television

Young person faces television and looks at screen. Attention is focussed on the television screen rather than on another person or elsewhere in the room.

Looks around room

Young person averts gaze from television; either momentarily or for a longer period of time. This includes any gazing which is not directly at the television or at another person.

Looks towards Person

Young person looks towards/focuses attention on another person in the room; either momentarily or for a longer period of time. This person is specified using the relevant subject key.

Shuts eyes for period of time

Young person shuts eyes for unspecified period of time. The opening of eyes is recognised by the use of one of the above three keys. This does not include the automatic reaction of shutting eyes when sneezing.

Facial Expressions:

Smiles/Looks Happy

Young person smiles in any manner except when the teeth are well separated (laugh)
This implies that the young person is happy or is amused by what he has seen.

Frowns/Looks Angry

Face contorted into a frown with the lowering of eyebrows and furrowing of forehead. The young person is said to have an angry expression which implies he is displeased or angry at what he has seen.

Grimaces/ Looks Uneasy

Face contorted into a grimace with face being screwed up. By pulling this face, the young person is said to be feeling uneasy or upset be what he has seen.

Neutral Facial Expression/ Looks Relaxed

When face is expressionless. This category implies that the smiling, frowning and grimacing facial expressions have terminated and the young person is relaxed.

Non-verbal Behaviours and Gestures:

Gestures towards person

Young person uses hand and arm movements together or just hand movements towards another person in some form of expression. This person will be specified using the relevant subject key.

Gestures towards television

Young person uses hand and arm movements or just hand movements towards the television set in some form of expression.

Shakes Head

Young person moves head in sideways movement, indicating some disapproval or negative attitude.

Nods Head

Young person moves head in up and down movement, indicating approval or positive attitude.

Posture:

Sits on edge of seat

Young person moves forward in seat so is sitting on the edge of the seat. This is accompanied with a leaning posture towards the television. This category also includes the young person actually rising from their seat although not to a full upright standing position (this standing would lead to a 'time out' period until the young person was seated again).

Sits back in seat

Young person sits back in seat, usually leaning away from the television or in an upright position towards the back of the chair.

Folds Arms

Young person has arms resting on body with one arm on top of the other in a folded position across the chest or lower torso.

Arms unfolded on body

Young person has arms resting on body but not in folded position. This may occur as a result of the arms being physically unfolded or may occur when the young person changes position from resting their head on the arms or removing their hands from their face. It does not have to follow the **folds arms** behaviour.

Rests head on hands/arms

Young person is in a leaning stance with head supported either by hands or arms. May have chin resting on fist or a flat or clenched palm resting on the side of the face

Changes Position/Fidgets

Any movements made by the young person which alters their position, except for those with their own categorisation. Movements may be momentarily (i.e. fidget) or may last longer (actual change/shift in position). The movement can be made by any part of the body.

Vocalisations:

Silence

No speaking or vocalisations are emitted from the young person. Sneezing or other involuntary vocalisations such as hiccups are not included as an interruption of silence. This category implies that commenting, talking, replying, swearing, exclaiming and laughing have all terminated.

Laughing

Young person smiles with open jaws, can be with or without actual laughing sound.

Sings/Follows Music

Young person follows music either by singing, tapping or humming in time with the film soundtrack. Can be vocalised or non-vocalised.

Yawns

Young person opens mouth for period of time, may include hands being lifted to face to cover mouth or some vocalisation being emitted. These will not be scored separately but will be categorised under the one heading as one distinct behaviour.

Coughs

Young person makes a coughing noise. May include hand to mouth movements which again will not be scored separately but under the one behaviour category.

Swears

Young person makes obscene verbal comment. If made to another person, that person will be specified using the relevant subject key. If made with a non-verbal gesture this will be recorded separately but concurrently.

Exclaims

Young person makes a verbal exclamation eg: **Oh God!** If made with a non-verbal gesture this will be recorded separately but concurrently.

Makes a comment about the film (positively)

Young person comments in a positive or neutral tone about some related aspect of the film's content. If made to another person, that person will be specified using the relevant subject key.

Makes a comment about the film (negatively)

Young person comments in a negative tone about some related aspect of the film's content.

Talks (not related to the film- positively)

Young person talks about a topic unrelated to the film in a positive or neutral tone.

Talks (not related to the film- negatively)

Young person talks about a topic unrelated to the film in a negative tone

Replies to Comment (positively)

Verbal reply is made either to a comment or statement (related/unrelated) in a positive or neutral tone. Other person is specified using the relevant subject key.

Replies to Comment (negatively)

Verbal reply is made either to a comment or statement (related/unrelated) in a negative tone. Other person is specified using the relevant subject key.

Behaviours

Fiddles with Hands

Hands are moved, fiddles with. This does not include gesturing or changing position, but refers to hands being kept in same place but movement of fingers or whole hand.

Hands Still

Hands are kept still. This implies that hand movements have terminated and that hands and fingers are still.

Puts Hands to Face

Hands are lifted to face, either momentarily or for a longer period. This includes scratching but not hand movements related to coughing or sneezing.

Hits

Sharp movement of hand to object or person (specified by relevant subject key). Can include punching with open or closed fist or slapping with open flat palm. Can be downwards or sideways movement.

Error

Behaviour or subject scored is incorrect. Followed by correct subject or behaviour category.

APPENDIX V: DETAILED SCENE CONTENTS OF VIDEO FILMS STUDIED

DETAILED SCENE CONTENTS OF VIDEO FILMS STUDIED

Key Scenes- Project Shadowchaser- The Edge of Darkness:

2.30 - Explosions- see woman running around **3.07** - Gun is pointed at woman's head, she's pleading with her husband **4.16** - there is a big explosion **4.36** - the woman is killed	**2.30 to 4.36 - Scene 1: Violent**
10.21- emergency alarms going off **10.45** - another ship is going to hit the ship **15.14** - engines fire and shop moves out of way	**10.21 to 15.14 -Scene 2:Threat**
16.52 - the other ship tries to hit the main ship **18.07** - the ship gets hit- everyone falls over **18.14** - pole goes through woman's stomach **18.59** - see Tanya in pain **19.03** - see close up of pole in stomach **20.00** - see couple together- her dead	**16.52 to 20.00 - Scene 3: Horror**
21.21 - Cody hits Danny **21.55** - big explosions **22.39** - Danny is sucked out **23.43** - others get back inside safely **23.44** - close up of Tanya- dead	**21.21 to 23.44 - Scene 4: Threat**
24.53 - Renko hits object in anger	
28.51 - in other ship- Lennox notices something moving **30.12** - see dead man in chair **32.53** - Lennox blown off engine	**28.51 to 32.53- Scene 5:Storyline**
33.39 - see unknown life form on computer screen **33.57** - Cody points gun at Renko **34.59** - see unknown life form on computer screen	**33.39 to 34.59- Scene 6: Threat**

35.05 - see screen through Alien's eyes
35.17- see Mack the captain
35.41 - hear noise and see data on robot's screen
35.59 - cocks gun
36.19 - chain is around his neck
36.30 - being dragged along by chain
36.50 - Mack is hung up
36.54 - crashes through floor
37.01 - he dies

35.05 to 37.01 - Scene 7: Violent

37.11 - Dee is shot at
37.40 - Dee climbs down chain and sees Mack
38.06 - close up of Dee looking terrified
38.17 - see Max hanging, hear footsteps

37.11 to 38.17 -Scene 8: Violent

41.15 - light flashes and explosion

46.43 - see Android shooting
46.54 - see gun pointed at woman again
47.08 - shoot at robot
47.16 - Rea's dad is shot
47.41- Rea crying

46.43 to 47.41 - Scene 9: Violent

48.57 - Professor jumps/hears something
49.29 - Professor shot
50.24 -shot at

48.57 to 50.24-Scene 10: Violent

51.51 - see Robot's face

53.19 - Cody puts gun to Renko's head
53.55 - Rea knocks out Cody
54.22 - Kicks Cody again

53.19 to 54.22-Scene 11: Violent

54.53 - Professor makes Rea jump

56.03 - Snake points gun at Renko

57.22 - Rea points gun at Robot (disguised as Prof)
57.35 - Robot changes faces
57.57 - See loads of wires on Robot's face
58.47 - Robot chases them/door is locked

57.22 to 58.47- Scene 12: Threat

59.35 - Cody hits Renko
59.43 - Renko points gun at Cody
60.15 - Lennox hits Renko
62.01 - Cody points gun at Renko

59.35 to 62.01 - Scene 13: Violent

64.17 - smoke comes out from Wheel's chair
64.24 - chair goes out of control
64.48 - Wheel's gets locked in decompression room
65.00 - starts choking
65.18 - face explodes, blood splatters on door

64.17 to 65.18 - Scene 14: Horror

65.33 - crew shot at - robot disguised as Dee
66.51 - Lennox shot in stomach
67.36 - gun shot
68.11 - Lennox grabs "Dee"
68.47 - "Dee" starts to strangle Lennox
69.00 - blue light appears in both faces
69.11 - faces begin to merge together - see blood
69.35 - robot gets up
70.12 - shoot at robot
70.42 - fight stops

65.33 to 70.42-Scene 15: Violent

73.05 - strobe light- robot can't see them

73.35 - crew all pointing guns at each other
74.43 - ready to shoot each other

73.35 to 74.43- Scene 16: Violent

79.42 - robot getting closer
80.31 - see robot coming downstairs
80.47 - strobe lights go on
81.07 - right up close to them
82.30 - strobes stop - robot hits Snake
83.08 - Snake gets angry
83.13 - Snake tries to overload the robot
83.35 - Robot falls down stairwell

79.42 to 83.35 - Scene 17: Violent

83.55 - Renko points gun at Cody
84.02 - Renko hits Cody
84.38 - Renko knocked out
85.29 - Explosions stop

83.55 to 85.29 - Scene 18: Violent

86.22 - Renko points gun
87.09 - Renko hits Rea
87.39 - Robot's hand goes through Renko's body
87.50 - Robot's body crawls along
88.40 - says "give you a hand with that" (funny)
88.44 - Cody shoots robot/get into pod
90.22 - robot hanging onto pod
90.48 - robot gets burnt
90.56 - robot shoots off as pod blasts off

86.22 to 90.56-Scene 19: Violent

91.25 - Cody and Rea in pod after escaping
92.11 - Max (the dog) licks them

92.28 - end of film

91.25 to 92.11- Scene 20- Storyline

Key Points- Surviving the Game:

1.04 - see men with guns/ switches between Mason and forest
1.52 - men say "there he is"
2.09 - shot man and dog run over
2.33 - fight between Mason and taxi driver
2.46 - close up of bow
3.03 - guy shot with arrow
3.11 - Mason carries dead dog

1.04 to 3.11 - Scene 1: Violent

4.38 - find gun in bin
4.49 - "they kill people" says friend
4.55 - Mason is told "should always check barrel"
5.11 - puts gun in pocket

4.38 to 5.11 - Scene 2: Threat

5.41 - goes to steal food
5.57 - security guard appears
6.06 - guard hits Hank
6.10 - fight with gun
6.17 - Mason threatens him
6.51 - guard runs off

5.41 to 6.51 - Scene 3: Violent

9.48 - Hank's dead
9.58 - two graves, Hank and dog

9.48 to 9.58- Scene 4: Emotional

11.20-Mason walks across the road
11.28 - Mason tries to kill himself, Cole pushes him out of the way
11.35-Cole tries to talk to Mason

11.20 to 11.35-Scene 5: Threat

24.45 - gets out sword to kill pig
24.56 - pig's head is brought out on a plate
27.28 - moves pig's head nearer to Mason
27.37 - Mason turns it away
27.10 - Hawkins moves it back to face Mason
29.32 - group talk at dinner

24.45 to 29.55 - Scene 6: Storyline

34.45 - gun pointedat Mason's head, make him get up
35.41 - have fight/ others all getting excited
36.01 - mason is thrown out the door — **34.45 to 36.53-Scene 7: Violent**
36.08 - shoot at his feet/ talking about killing him
36.53 - dad pushes son against door

37.54 - Mason running, they're chatting at breakfast
39.19 - son doesn't want to take part

39.40 - hunters set off on quad bikes
41.15 - get off bikes, running
41.38 - see bow and arrow
41.49 - man shoots, hits tree, Mason escapes — **39.40 to 43.20 - Scene 8: Violent**
42.08 - aggression between Hawkins and Griffin
Walking around with guns
43.20 - know he's gone back to the hut

43.35 - breaks door of locked room
43.41 - see heads in jars — **43.35 to 43.57- Scene 9: Horror**
43.57 - see plaque with his name on it

44.04 - gets petrol and splashes it over hut
44.23 - others come back to hut
44.52 - fire starts
45.03 - Hawkins comes out of hut/ fights Mason
45.36 - son goes into hut to get dad — **43.35 to 48.10 -Scene 10: Violent**
45.53 - goes back to fight outside/ gets dad out hut
46.38 - throws Hawkins into hut
48.10 - gets back on bikes

48.20 - Mason talks to wolf to get away — **48.20 to 48.30- Scene 11: Comedy**
48.30- Mason gets past the wolf

48.44 - see bikes

49.13 - Mason on cliff edge — **49.13 to 49.35-Scene 12: Violent**
49.25 - shoot at him, he jumps off into river

53.03 - puts cigarettes in tree
53.19 - gun pointed at ready
53.35 - Mason jumps on Griffen
53.50 - hits Griffin's head against tree — **53.03 to 53.50 - Scene 13: Violent**

55.29 - see Griffen tied up, Mason holding gun
58.39 - points gun at Griffin — **55.29 to 61.10- Scene 14: Violent**
61.10 - talking about his wife and child

62.00 - find Griffin in cave
63.48 - Griffen shot in head as tries to leave
63.54 - Burns hits son
63.56 - gun pointed at dad
64.00 - says "like family no one gets away"
64.52 - Mason fires gun and misses them

62.00 to 64.52 - Scene 15: Violent

66.30 - in the water
66.40 - Mason goes back to bikes
67.03 - puts ignition in petrol tank
67.20 - drives away
67.30 - shoots at Mason's tyre, he falls off
67.36 - bike explodes
67.42 - Cole gets legs blown off
68.06 - Mason gets gun and runs off
68.11 - Burns talks to Cole
68.43 - Cole chokes
68.58 - dies
69.04 - Burns upset

66.30 to 69.04 - Scene 16: Horror

69.30 - Mason's legs bleeding
69.58 - dad apologises to son
70.14 - son says that he'll "never forgive him"

69.30 to 70.14- Scene 17: Emotional

70.55 - Mason shoots at tree/ falls over as bridge
71.55 - climbs across tree
72.33 - Mason starts throwing rocks at the others
72.42 - son falls over and is hanging on
72.59 - son falls off into ravine

70.55 to 72.59 - Scene 18: Violent

73.37 - see Mason is injured
73.44 - Mason falls down slope
73.54 - lands on tree

73.37 to 73.54- Scene 19: Threat

74.08 - firing guns
75.34 - pointing guns at each other

74.08 to 75.34- Scene 20: Violent

78.22 - pointing gun, hear noise
78.46 - fires gun
79.06 - throws gun away
79.11 - Mason is in front of him, fight
80.06 - Mason breaks his neck

78.22 to 80.06 - Scene 21: Violent

80.14 - Burns on bike
80.50 - starts up plane
81.12 - no one in it
81.20 - fires gun and plane explodes
81.32 - other plane goes and Burn escapes

80.14 to 81.32-Scene 22: Threat

82.31 - Mason is alive

83.28 - answer phone goes in office
83.35- wife wanting to know where husband and son are

83.28 to 83.35-Scene 23: Emotional

84.30 - Burns car doesn't start
85.27 - see Mason's shadow
85.57 - shots are fired, hear Mason's voice
86.21 - Mason kicks Burns
87.07 - puts belt chain round Mason's neck
87.21 - tries to electrocute him
87.30 - gun pointed at Burns, says "do it"
88.13 - drops gun, does something to it first
88.32 - Burns puts bullet in gun
88.40 - fires gun
88.45 - Mason says "something you should always do"
88.48 - see cigarette butt in gun
88.50 - gun backfires and explodes killing Burns
88.54 - says "always check the barrel"

84.30 to 88.54-Scene 24: Violent

88.58 - film ends

Key Points -No Surrender:

0.43 - gang is outside bike shop
1.39 - puts chewing gum in door lock
2.08 - break into show room, talk about stealing
2.36 - police car outside, they hide
2.44 - police see them and radios in
3.15 - Taylor drives car through shop window
3.28 - others ride bikes through window, police chase them
4.57 - police cars overturn
5.21 - two boys on bikes- slap hands together
5.23 - police car explodes, boys ride off

0.43 to 5.23-Scene 1:Antisocial

6.30- Greg and Ethan are teasing each other
7.05 - Greg hits Ethan in kitchen- playfully

6.30 to 7.05- Scene 2: Storyline

8.22 - Greg sees guys on beach, gathering round
8.38 - Taylor punches guy/switch to Ethan at karate
9.18 - see Karate class
9.44 - fighting on beach
10.04 - Greg wants to break up fight, say fighting for money
10.25 - guy hits Taylor from behind
10.37 - Taylor kicks guy in face
11.00 - Taylor wants Greg to fight
11.41 - start fighting
12.44 - fight finishes with Greg winning
13.11 - Greg gets on bike he's won
13.34 - Taylor rides over Greg's push-bike

8.22 to 13.34 - Scene 3:Violent

14.13 - gang are drinking beer
15.14 - tell Greg he's going to help them rob a house
16.10 - says he won't do it
16.16 - Greg puts on mask and breaks in
16.41 - sees person in house, didn't expect anyone
16.48 - man in house has bat
16.54 - others come in, Greg wants them to leave
17.10 - put couple in cupboard
17.20 - Greg tried to stop others, fight
17.46 - spray mace in Greg's face
17.54 -Taylor hits Greg, he falls down the stairs
18.10 - Greg is dead
18.59 - take him out of the house

14.13 to 18.59 - Scene 4:Violent

19.31- Girls at school see body and scream
20.11 - Ethan sees Greg hanging in gym

19.31 to 20.43 - Scene 5:Horror

20.43 - Ethan's mum comes in, hugs Ethan

21.43 - see mum upset
25.02 - mum crying
25.24 - hugs Ethan

21.43 to 25.24- Scene 6: Emotional

27.16 - start fight in canteen (Ethan and gang member)
28.11 - eventually broken up by teachers

27.16 to 28.11 - Scene 7: Violent

30.15 - teacher strikes 'Scorpion' gang member in karate class
30.51 - switch to 'Lions' karate class
31.27 - scorpion class- teacher hitting boy
32.38 - sensei tells guy to hit him in stomach
32.59 - guy falls to floor
33.04 - switches back to 'Lions' class again

30.15 to 33.04 - Scene 8: Violent

33.51 - sensei of 'Lions' talking about Greg dying
34.05- finishes talking about Greg

33.51 to 34.05 - Scene 9: Emotional

35.31 - scorpions tell Gavin about Greg
36.04 - know that Gavin is behind the stealing

36.37 - Ethan goes into Greg's room/upset
38.15 - Greg's ghost appears in Ethan's room

36.37 to 38.15-Scene 10: Emotional

40.04 - gang talking about their crime
40.13 - Ethan wants to join the 'Scorpions'

40.04 to 40.26 -Scene 11: Storyline

40.26 - Ethan joins gang

42.25 - Taylor tells Ethan to humiliate friend
43.38 - throws food over friend's head
43.41 - food fight in canteen

42.25 to 44.09 - Scene 12: Comedy

44.32 - Taylor kicks Eddie in karate class

45.26 - fight between Ethan and Eddie in karate class
45.41 - kicks Eddie in neck
46.15 - hits Ethan in face
46.36 - Ethan to helps Eddie up
46.54 - sensei not impressed
47.07 - says mercy isn't good

45.26 to 467.07 -Scene 13: Violent

49.13 - guys with bats stop Ethan and Eddie
49.42 - start fighting
50.18 - hits guy's head on trailer
50.23 - finishes fight
50.27 - Eddie said "that was fun"

49.13 to 50.27 - Scene 14: Violent

55.35 - Taylor not happy that Ethan goes out stealing with them
56.12 - Ethan climbs on back of van
57.21 - see sign about guard dog on gate
57.29 - in warehouse-stealing
58.17 - guard walking about inside
58.50 - sees them stealing
59.06 - calls police
59.16 - gets out gun
59.32 - says "freeze" to Ethan
59.41 - gun shot
60.05 - Ethan jumps on him
60.47 - Taylor puts gun in trousers
61.19 - chased by police
62.03 - open van doors, throw out tv's
62.25 - police car crashes
62.42 - police car overturns
62.52 - police get out, guys get away
63.02 - scorpions laughing in van

55.35 to 63.02-Scene 15: Antisocial

63.30 - drop of Ethan, go to their warehouse
64.42 - Teacher tells them off because they got chased

63.30 to 64.42- Scene 16: Antisocial

65.30 - Ethan gets caught by mum creeping back into the house
67.00 - she's angry and says to stay away from 'Scorpions'

65.30 to 67.00-Scene 17: Emotional

70.00- Running around track
70.21 - Ethan sees Greg on running track

70.00 to 70.21-Scene 18: Emotional

72.13 - trade in van at garage
73.31 - one of the gang sprays mace in someone's face
73.38 - flashes to Greg's face
73.49 - Ethan realises how they killed Greg
74.00 - Patrick drives off
74.05 - Eddie tells Ethan the truth

72.13 to 74.21- Scene 19: Violent

74.56 - karate competition at school
75.38 - first fight
76.18 - Ethan comes in
77.48 - scorpions win first fight
79.34 - Gavin tells Taylor to finish Ethan
80.57 - Ethan says will 'even the score'
83.02 - Fight between Taylor and Ethan
85.00 - Eddie rushes on to stop Taylor
85.17 - Taylor shoots the gun
85.24 - Taylor hits detective's head against mat
85.30 - Taylor rides off on bike
85.57 - Ethan follows Taylor
87.12 - fighting outside
88.05 - Ethan about to kill Taylor
88.06 - mum arrives
88.14 - Greg appears
88.17 - Greg says don't do it
88.29 - Ethan says "game over"

74.56 to 89.15 - Scene 20: Violent

88.36 - detective arrests Taylor
88.42 - reads him his rights
88.54 - walks off with mum and friends

88.36 to 88.54-Scene 21: Antisocial

89.15 - end of film

Key Points - Love and a 45:

1.18 - see gun in car
1.42 - see Watty in mask in security camera
1.57 - kid reading magazine with gun and woman's breasts
2.09 - see Watty in mask
2.14 - places gun on counter
3.32 - kid picks up gun, points it at Watty
3.42 - Watty points his gun at kid, says want money
4.43 - see Star on road
4.52 - she goes to truck window
5.53 - holds the handcuffs
6.17 - security guard tries to kiss her
6.26 - points gun at security guard
6.41 - gets his keys
6.44 - goes back to shop
7.40 - gives kid the gun
8.17 - Watty's gun is not loaded, points it at kid
8.27 - "never rob with loaded gun"
10.18 - see Star again

1.18 to 10.18 - Scene 1: Violent

11.54 - them in bed playing around

13.20 - see two guys outside
13.54 - see gun in back of trousers
14.30 - making sexual remarks
14.45 - cocks gun behind back
14.53 - reach for their guns

13.20 to 14.53 - Scene 2: Threat

16.01 - Star and Watty start kissing
16.45 - are kissing but Billy drives up

16.01 to 16.45- Scene 3: Sexual

21.58 - Billy and Watty check their guns
22.04 - Billy's is loaded
22.10 - Billy takes drugs
22.27 - put on their masks
22.36 - rob shop
22.44 - close up of him in mask with gun
22.47 - counter girl has taken drugs
23.43 - she offers to get 'high' with Watty
23.46 - threatens her
24.10 - she takes off Billy's mask
24.28 - hear police sirens
24.59 - Billy shoots her
25.03 - close up of Billy's face
26.06 - sirens go past, don't stop
26.39 - Billy and Watty drive away

21.58 to 26.39-Scene 4: Violent

26.46 - Billy is going mad in the car
27.44 - mentions drugs
28.07 - points gun at Watty
28.49 - talking about prison
29.28 - points gun at him again
29.40 - cocks gun, says to give him the car keys
30.04 - Watty grabs fork and knife in café
30.26 - throws knife, gun flies into the air
30.28 - stabs Billy's hand
30.31 - stabs Billy's neck with the fork
30.38 - catches gun
31.20 - Billy trying to get fork out of his neck

26.46 to 31.20 - Scene 5: Violent

31.58 - gun on tv show that Star is watching
32.09 - kills woman on screen

33.58 - on couch together
34.15 - sheriffs come into the house
34.41 - grabs Watty
34.47 - points gun at Star
35.17 - hits Watty
35.55 - hits Watty again
36.00 - points gun to Star again
36.32 - gun at Watty's head again — **33.58 to 38.33 - Scene 6: Violent**
37.06 - Star grabs him
37.18 - hits Star/ fight between Watty and sheriff
37.44 - close up of gun
37.49 - Star shoots sheriffs -see blood
38.00 - close up of dead man, blood pouring out of mouth
38.33 - all lying on floor

39.35 - flash back to shooting sheriffs — **39.35 to 39.41- Scene 7: Violent**
39.41- see sheriff with blood all over him

40.04 - girls dancing topless in club — **40.04 to 40.42- Scene 8: Sexual**
40.42 - girl dancing in front of Billy

45.03 - see Star and Watty on TV
45.13 - Watty points gun at Justice of Peace
45.27 - says will shoot him if doesn't marry them
45.56 - they kiss holding the gun
46.02 - tie up Justice of Peace, taking photos — **45.03 to 47.45 - Scene 9: Violent**
47.10 - they gag him, swop their car for his
47.45 - the Justice of the Peace starts laughing

47.58 - Billy having his head tattooed
48.33 - Creepy and Dinosaur come into tattoo parlour
48.38 - points gun to tattoos's head
48.45 - stabs Billy in head with tattoo gun, points gun at Billy
49.05 - points gun at face
49.16 - shoots at tattoos's legs
49.40 - swings tattoo gun around
49.56 - puts tattoo gun on Billy's head — **47.58 to 53.05 -Scene 10: Violent**
51.11 - points gun at girl
51.32 - dancing around with gun
52.16 - puts gun to Billy's throat
52.46 - injects drug into Billy's arm
53.00 - close up of Billy shouting

53.49 - Star's mum answers the door with gun in her hand
55.15 - see Star's dad talking about drugs
57.12 - gives them a drug as a present

53.49 to 57.12- Scene 11- Drugs

62.24 - mum answers door again with gun
62.33 - Billy grabs gun and points it at mum

62.24 to 62.33- Scene 12- Violent

63.58 - sex scene between Star and Watty
64.44 - end of sex scene

63.58 to 64.44- Scene 13: Sexual

65.04 - Star's parents house (Billy and two gangsters there)
65.20 - gun pointed at mum, she's on her knees
66.38 - Vergil's fingers are pulled back
68.35 - see Star on TV
68.57 - Star's mum hits bloke/ toss coin to see if they'll live
69.00 - shoots guy (not dead)
69.06 - gun goes off again
69.22 - see them all lying there
69.37 - see gun, screen goes blank

65.04 to 69.37 - Scene 14: Violent

69.43 - guys in car bleeding
70.34 - Bob dies
71.25 - Billy hits Creepy's head against dashboard
71.46 - throws him out

69.43 to 71.46 -Scene 15: Violent

71.52 - Watty's cleaning the gun
72.34 - gives gun to Star

71.52 to 72.34- Scene 16: Threat

73.28 - see police at bank when cashing cheque
74.21- little kid in truck with gun

73.28 to 74.21- Scene 17:Threat

77.40 - Watty and Star in car
78.19 - sees policemen in mirror
79.24 - policeman points gun at them
79.32 - policeman gets shot in head
79.40 - Billy points gun at Watty
79.54 - all pointing guns at each other
81.07 - all put guns down

77.40 to 81.33 - Scene 18: Violent

83.30 - Star soaks top to distract border guard
83.40- Guard lets them through the border

83.30 to 83.40- Scene 19: Comedy

84.29 - Billy grabs Star
84.41 - points gun at Star in car yard
85.14 - Billy points gun at both, gets out of car
85.59 - injects speed gun into arm
86.11 - grabs Star, puts gun to head
87.21 - drops gun for second
87.32 - points it back at Star
88.29 - points gun right to head
89.30 - Star grabs gun from Billy
89.37 - fight between Billy and Watty
89.48 - gun flies through air
90.06 - puts gun to neck, no bullets left
90.11 - Star gets gun but no bullets either

84.29 to 90.57 - Scene 20: Violent

90.29 - Star injects speed into Billy's neck, he overdoses
90.57 - Billy dies

90.29 to 90.57- Scene 21: Drugs

91.10 - Watty and Star take drug together
91.21 - sexual image, finger in mouth
91.50 - checks gun, loads them
92.02 - kiss in car, talk about future
93.06 - drive off, screen goes hazy

91.10 to 93.06 - Scene 22: Drugs

93.30 - end of film

Key Scenes- ID:

3.20- fighting on video screen
3.34 - close up of fighting
4.06 - close up of video- weapon used
4.18- someone being hit

3.20 to 4.18 -Scene 1:Violent

6.55- one of policeman falls over drunk

8.03- guy says to Trevor "What you staring at?"
8.58- threat of fight in pub

8.03 to 8.58- Scene 2: Threat

11.33 - fight on coach
11.46- see blood on face

11.33 to 12.10 - Scene 3: Violent

15.19 - at match, fans shouting, no violence
15.42- fans shouting derogatory comments at other fans

15.19 to 15.42- Scene 4: Threat

20.20 - glass thrown at rival fans in pub
21.16- fight starts in pub
21.27- Trevor tried to arrest someone
21.50- walking up street shouting after fight

20.20 to 21.30- Scene 5: Violent

26.03- policemen in toilets, all laughing
26.15- start urinating towards each other

26.03 to 26.15- Scene 6: Comedy

27.11- in pub, see rival fans' coach go past
27.22- John chases coach
27.35- All fans come running after John
27.48- fight with fans on coach- smash windows
28.15- police arrives, fight stops
28.34- John back in pub- hoisted on people's shoulders

27.22 to 28.15 -Scene 7: Violent

30.03- see Gumbo, Martin and Nick in back of car with weapons

32.15- fans talk about getting rid of police in pub (being derogatory about them)

34.18- John and Trevor have argument in car
34.50- John is driving recklessly

34.18 to 34.50 - Scene 8: Antisocial

35.35- John hits Trevor
35.45- John smashes up office

35.35 to 35.45- Scene 9: Violent

38.38- Martin accuses John of being "Old Bill"
38.52- Bob reaches for baseball bat
40.03 - John breaks cue in half and threatens Martin
40.26- John goes outside
40.40 - Martin apologises

38.38 to 40.40- Scene 10: Violent

42.00- John pretends not to be able to read
42.41- Realise they accuse him of being police

42.00 to 42.41- Scene 11: Storyline

43.30 - policemen playing football in warehouse
playing football in warehouse

43.30 to 43.48- Scene 12: Storyline

45.43 - John rapes his girlfriend
John walks off, see girlfriend crying

45.43 to 46.37 -Scene 13: Violence

50.29 - John kisses Linda (the barmaid) at Christmas

55.21- rival fans chase John and friends
55.58- they hide in a chemist shop
56.05- have aerosols ready

55.21 to 56.05 - Scene 14: Threat

58.50 - guy shows John the knife he has in his pocket at football match
59.03 - start shouting out their team name
59.17- knife gets pulled out, fight starts
60.18- John is escorted by police back to his own end of football ground
60.47- John is on crowds shoulders
61.27- police hitting the crowd with batons
61.51- police hitting someone

58.50 to 61.51-Scene 15: Violent

68.15- has argument with girlfriend on beach
68.29 - John walks off

68.15 to 68.29-Scene 16: Emotional

69.26- John has sex with Linda (barmaid)
70.35- end of sex scene

69.26 to 70.35 -Scene 17: Sexual

72.47 - at football match, shouting at rival fans
72.58 - start throwing things at rival fans
73.26- gumbo gets hit with a dart
73.35- Nick and Martin climb the barrier between the two groups of fans
74.28- John wants to hit a uniform policeman

72.47 to 74.28 - Scene 18: Violent

75.27 - John and friends chase other fans
76.05 - see other fans hiding
76.26 - see them holding weapons
76.44 - other fans get up from hiding place
76.54 - fans face each other- see weapons
77.10 - others run off, leave just John and Martin
77.27- fans into each other- shouting
77.31 - screen goes blank
77.39- police turn up- they all run off
77.55 - John is bleeding but realises he's not cut at all

75.27 to 77.55-Scene 19: Violent

82.30 - John goes to talk to the gang's ringleader
82.48- gets given drugs when shakes his hand

82.30 to 82.48- Scene 20: Drugs

88.04 - see picture of Bob with bat

88.42 - them the policemen upset as their case has closed
89.49 - Trevor stands up to John and says hit me

88.42 to 89.49-Scene 21: Emotional

90.46 - Linda attacks John and says she knew he was a policeman
92.27 - John leaves Linda's house

90.46 to 92.27- Scene 22: Violent

92.45 - John goes round to girlfriend's house
93.47- John walks off after having argument

92.45 to 94.18-Scene 23: Emotional

95.01- John smashes mirror at police station

95.44- John sitting crying

95.53- John smashes up his house
96.29 - makes a fire in the garden with his furniture

95.53 to 96.48 - Scene 24:Threat

96.49 - see John put drugs in his cereal
97.00- John just sitting in his damaged flat

96.49 to 97.00- Scene 25: Drugs

97.35- Trevor is asked to see someone in the police station
97.48 - Trevor sees Gumbo who has been arrested

97.35 to 97.48- Scene 26: Storyline

98.35 - see National Front march, all shouting
98.57 - Trevor sees John
99.06 - John has a skinhead and is shouting, tells Trevor he is on a job
99.28 - protesters fire-bomb an Asian shop
99.41 - John stops and is saluting Hitler

98.35 to 99.51 -Scene 27: Violent

99.51 - film ends

Key Points- Last Gasp:

1.35 - see man's ankles cut, man falls
1.47 - close up of dagger
2.05 - see heart being held in hands
2.16 - body on rack, painted blue, chest open

1.35 to 2.16 -Scene 1: Violent

3.45 - bottom view of body **4.18** - body with chest open down shaft	**3.45 to 4.18 - Scene 2: Horror**
7.28 - shoot Indians **7.56** - Indian shot **8.37** - points gun at Indian on ground **9.21** - see victim's face- terrified **9.30** - close up of Chase while shooting Indian	**7.28 to 9.30 - Scene 3: Violent**
10.21 - close up of arrow **10.24** - guy shot with arrow **10.30** - Indian jumps through roof **10.35** - cuts throat **10.54** - fighting on jeep **11.08** - bites neck, blood dripping **11.29** - stabs in neck **11.37** - breathes his last gasp	**10.21 to 11.37 - Scene 4: Violent**
17.57 - Chase with Indian make-up on	
19.26 - sex scene between Nora and Julian **20.51** - see Indian's face rather than Julian's	**19.26 to 20.51 - Scene 5: Sexual**
26.26 - detective finds blood on car seat **26.31** - window smashed by mechanic **27.08** - detective threatens mechanic with drill between legs **27.43** - close up of drill between legs **28.07** - stops threatening the mechanic	**26.26 to 28.07 - Scene 6: Violent**
29.57 - replay of fight between Chase and Indian **30.04** - knife in neck of chief	**29.57 to 30.04- Scene 7: Violent**
31.01 - detective climbs gate **32.01** - knows someone else is there **32.07** - see Chase as Indian, chases him **32.19** - cuts detective's legs as climbs gate **32.31** - see him cut and kill detective	**31.01 to 32.31 - Scene 8: Violent**
34.59 - couple in car kissing **35.21** - go into a field **35.44** - finds hand in field	**34.59 to 35.44 - Scene 9: Sexual**
38.24 - trying to break in to house with credit card **38.39** - **38.39** says "don't you have a gold card"	**38.24 to 38.39-Scene 10: Comedy**

41.20 - Chase sees Indian with dagger — **41.20 to 41.41- Scene 11: Threat**
41.41 - he throws something at it and it disappears

42.18 - see Chase looking at Julian in building site
43.02 - he cuts his legs under the car, tries to crawl away
43.21 - cuts him again
43.51 - Julian falls off scaffolding — **42.18 to 44.35 -Scene 12: Violent**
44.17 - cuts legs as gets in to car
44.19 - slashes him
44.35 - see Chase in his house

53.43 - see Chase with a dagger
53.53 - slashes something
53.58 - see Chase pour blood in to bowl — **53.43 to 55.35 - Scene 13: Horror**
54.07 - close up of Chase with tribal make-up
54.11 - drinks blood from cup
55.35 - see Indian in Nora's apartment

58.45- sex scene in kitchen
59.10 - end of sex scene in — **59.10 to 60.29 - Scene 14: Sexual**

62.03 - close up of freezer — **62.03 to 62.43- Scene 15: Horror**
62.43 - Nora sees blood in freezer

66.02 - Nora checks her gun before meeting Chase
68.39 - points gun at his back
69.17 - she drops the gun
69.24 - he points gun at himself- says "do it" — **66.02 to 70.16 - Scene 16: Threat**
69.44 - she moves away
70.04 - he tells her he killed her husband
70.16 - she starts crying

73.42 - old woman lying dead in kitchen/throat cut — **73.42 to 73.51 - Scene 17: Horror**
73.51 - close up of old woman again

76.15 - Nora arrives home/ door is open
77.19 - she loads gun at his house
77.33 - he climbs gate to his house
78.12 - Nora shoots at body hanging up/Chase standing behind it
78.24 - she runs upstairs and he follows her
78.26 - he cuts her legs
80.13 - she pushes him and he falls through floor **76.15 to 82.54- Scene 18:Violent**
80.20 - she stabs him in the hand
80.38 - he pulls the knife out of his hand
80.52 - close up of Chase's hand/ finger dislocated
81.32 - he jumps out of the window after her
82.01 - he bites her leg- see blood
82.09 - she puts a belt round his neck, he tries to get the dagger as she's strangling him
82.46 - they're face to face and he breathes his last gasp
82.54 - he dies

83.31 - Nora and Goldie in her apartment
84.59 - Goldie tells Nora she owes her life **83.31 to 85.07 - Scene 19: Threat**
85.07 - Nora in tribal make-up says "I know"

85.14 - film ends

APPENDIX VI: QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED IN SECOND INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interpersonal Reactivity Index (In Appendix III)
Spielberger State Trait Anger Scale and
Anger Expression Scale (In Appendix III)
Initial Film Interview
The Social Reflection Questionnaire

INITIAL INTERVIEW ON VIDEO FILM

1) Sample Number _____

2) What did you think of the film?

Excellent _____ Good _____ Average _____ Poor_____

3) Why did you say the film was _____?

Now, I want you to remember back to the film you've just seen

4) What's the first scene that comes to mind?

5) Why did you choose that scene?

6) Who is the first character to come to your mind?

7) Why did you choose this character?

8) What part of the film excited you the most?

9) Why did this part excite you?

10)Was there a scene that made you angry?

Why did it make you angry?

11) Was there a scene that made you feel calm?

Why did it make you feel calm?

12) Was there a scene that made you laugh?

Why did it make you laugh?

13) Was there a scene that made you feel sad?

Why did it make you feel sad?

14) If you could be in this film, who would you like to be?

Character _____

15) Why would you like to be this character?

16) Did you get bored while watching the film? Yes _____ No _____

If **yes,** which particular part of the film made you feel bored?

If **no,** what was it about the film that stopped you from getting bored?

17) Were there times when you wanted to fast-forward the film? Yes___ No _____

If **yes,** which parts would you fast-forward and why?

18) Were there parts of the film that you wanted to freeze-frame? Yes___ No ___

If **yes**, why would you freeze these particular parts?

19) Have you seen the main actor/actress in any other films? Yes ___ No ___

If **yes,** what films have you seen them in?

20) Do you like this actor/actress?

21) Would you watch this film again? Yes___ No ___

Why is this?

22) Does this remind you of any other films you've seen? Yes____ No ____

If **yes,** what films are they

23) Do you usually like this type of film? Yes____ No ___

Why is this?

If **yes**, can you name the films you have watched and liked which you think are a similar type to this one?

24) What was the last film like this one that you watched?

Film _____

25) When did you last watch it?

26) Do you think that the film had a point to make? Yes ____ No ____

27) If **yes** what was the point the film was trying to make?

28) What do you think about that?

29) Was there anything in the film that you felt was unjust or unfair?

30) Which three words from the following list best describe the film?

Bad _____ Disturbing _____

Good _____ Rubbish _____

Upsetting _____ Mega _____

Amusing _____ Useful _____

Disgusting _____ Educational _____

Horrific _____ Scary _____

Boring _____ Stupid _____

Sexy _____ Angry _____

Wicked _____

Why did you think this?

31) Did you find the story true to life? Yes ____ No _____

How was it true to life?

32) What did you think the film lacked eg. Romance, action etc? If yu think it lacked something why did it lack this and what would you add to make it more enjoyable?

(Use list as prompt if needed)

Action
romance
sex
violence
animals
blood/gore
boys
girls
guns
car-chases
horror
fights
knives/swords
humour

33_ What age group do you think the film was suitable for?

Age group _____

Why do you think this?

34) **Remembering back to the film again,** what was the first thing that happened?

35) What happened after this?

36) What was the last thing to happen in the film?

APPENDIX VII: QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED IN FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS (3 TO 4 MONTHS AND 9 TO 10 MONTHS)

General Information Interview
Follow- Up Film Interview
Delinquency Questionnaire
The Devereux Scale of Mental Disorder (In Appendix I)

THREE TO FOUR MONTH AND NINE TO TEN MONTH FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW (GENERAL INFORMATION)

1) Sample Number _____

2) Date of Birth _____

3) Date of discharge from institution _____

4) Date of admission to present placement _____

5) Number of placements since Onley/Glenthorne? Inst Foster

6) Where are you living at the present time?

Home (with parents) _____

In a YOI/adult prison (name) _____

In secure accommodation(name) _____

With friends _____

In your own house _____

In a hostel _____

With other relatives _____

Adoptive home _____

Children's Home _____

Foster Home _____

Assisted Housing (SS/Probation) _____

Psychiatric Hospital _____

7a) **If in YOI,** Have you been in a young offender institution for the whole time since the last interview?

Yes _____ No _____

If **no,** where have you also lived? _____

7b) How long have you been living at your current place (since the last interview)?

_____

7c) Where and with who have you also lived if different from where you live now?

8) Are you subject to a care order? Yes _____ No _____

9) Who currently resides in the your home **(In each case, specify exactly how many there are)**

Mother _____

Father _____

Step-mother/Cohabitee _____

Step-father/Cohabitee _____

Adoptive Mother _____

Adoptive Father _____

Brother(s) _____

Half-brother (s) _____

Adoptive Brothers_____

Sisters _____

Adoptive sister(s)_____

Half sister(s) _____

Partner _____

On your own _____

Own children _____

Other (please specify) _____

Homeless _____

Where do you plan to live in the future? _____

10) Do you have regular contact with you family?

Type of contact _____

Who with? _____

How often? _____

11) Do you have regular contact with anyone else?

Type of contact _____

Who with? _____

How often? _____

12) Have any of your family members had any of the following problems in the past three months?

	Yes	No	Who?
Criminality			
Learning Difficulties			
Psychiatric Illness			
Severe Medical complaints			

Drug abuse

Alcohol abuse

Self Harm

Partner Abuse

Death in the family

Current socioeconomic problems

13) Do you think any of the following has been a problem for you since you left Glenthorne/Onley? (Give details for each one)

Finding somewhere to live _____

Getting a job _____

Getting into the wrong company _____

Drinking too much _____

Keeping away from drugs _____

Staying away from solvents _____

Getting into trouble again _____

Getting on with family members _____

Managing money successfully _____

Avoiding turning to crime to

solve money problems _____

Gambling too much _____

Other (please specify) _____

14) Have you received any form of education since leaving Glenthorne/Onley?

Yes _____ No _____

Where? _____

For how long? _____

Qualifications achieved? _____

Currently (what qualification and where) _____

15) Have you been suspended since leaving Onley/Glenthorne/School? Yes ___ No _____

If so, for how long? _____

16) Have you been excluded? Yes _____ No ____

If so, how long ago was this? _____

17) Have you been in employment since leaving Onley/Glenthorne? Yes ____ No _____

Type of job? _____

Where? _____

For how long? _____

Currently (details)? _____

Are you currently looking for work? _____

How are you supporting yourself? Parents _____

Dole _____

Other (specify) _____

18) If unemployed, how long have you been unemployed for? _____

19) Have you committed any offences since the last interview? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, how many offences have you committed? _____

What offences have you committed?

In each case, what triggered you to commit the offence?

20) If you are currently serving a custodial sentence (that is not the same as when I first interviewed you), how long is it for?

_____ Months

What offence are you serving this sentence for?

_____

21) Date when you finish your sentence? _____

22) What is your current legal status?

Section 53 (1) _____

Section 53 (2) _____

Section 25 _____

Remand _____

Other _____

23) If you are currently in a YOI, have you had any adjudications since the last interview **(name date)**?

If **yes**, how many have you had? _____

Type of adjudication	Date (approx)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

24) What are your plans for the future?

THREE TO FOUR MONTH FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW ON FILM

1) What was the name of the film we showed you? _____

2) Is there one character who you can remember the most from the film? Why do you remember them?

Can you remember any of the other characters in the film? _____

_____

3) What was the general storyline as you remember it?

4) Is there a particular scene which you can remember well? Why do you remember this scene?

5) What other scenes can you remember? Why do you remember these scenes?

6) Can you remember the beginning of the film? Yes _____ No _____

If **yes**, what was it?

7) Can you remember the end of the film? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what was it?

8) Thinking back, if you could describe the film in three words how would you describe it?

Bad _____ Disturbing _____

Good _____ Rubbish _____

Upsetting _____ Mega _____

Amusing _____ Useful _____

Disgusting _____ Educational _____

Horrific _____ Scary _____

Boring _____ Stupid _____

Sexy _____ Angry _____

Wicked _____

Why did you choose this words?

9) Can you remember how you felt when you watched the film? (ie. Did you feel angry/sad/ calm/excited?) What was it about the film that made you feel like that?

10) Do you remember if you were bored while watching the film? Yes ___ No _____

If you were bored, can you remember what made you bored?
If you weren't bored, can you remember what stopped you from getting bored?

11) Can you remember who you would have been in the film?

12) Why would you have been this person?

13) Do you think the film was making a point about something? Yes ___ No ___

14) What do you think about that point?

15) Do you remember any of the actors? Yes _____ No _____

16) Have you seen the actors in anything since then? Yes ____ No _____

17) What have you seen them in?

18) Have you seen the film again in the last three months? Yes _____ No _____

If **yes**, Did you actively choose to watch it and why?

How many times have you seen the film since then? _____

If **no**, Why have you not seen it again?

19) Have you seen any similar films in the last three months? Yes _____ No _____

If **yes**, what were they and how many times have you seen them? Did you see them on television/video/satellite or at the cinema?

	No. of Times
Film 1_____	_____
Film 2 _____	_____
Film 3 _____	_____

20) What other films have you seen in the last three months? Did you see them on television/video/satellite or at the cinema?

21) What's your favourite film that you have seen in the last three months? Why is this your favourite?

_____

22) Do you consider that any of the films you have mentioned, have influenced you in any way?
Yes _____ No _____

23) In what ways have they influenced you?

24) Have you imitated or copied from these films? Yes _____ No _____

25) Which film did you imitate and what did you imitate/copy?

26) Do you consider that the film we showed you, influenced you in any way?
Yes _____ No _____

27) In what ways has it influenced you?

28) Have you imitated or copied anything from this film? Yes _____ No _____

29) What did you imitate/copy from this film?

30) Did anything in the film remind you of anything that has ever happened to you?
Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please specify

31) Did any of the characters in the film remind you of anyone you know?
Yes ___ No ___

If so, please specify

NINE TO TEN MONTH FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW ON FILM:

1) What was the name of the film we showed you? _____

2) Is there one character who you can remember the most from the film? Why do you remember them?

Can you remember any of the other characters in the film? _____

_____

3) What was the general storyline as you remember it?

4) Is there a particular scene which you can remember well? Why do you remember this scene?

5) What other scenes can you remember? Why do you remember these scenes?

6) Can you remember the beginning of the film? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what was it?

7) Can you remember the end of the film? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what was it?

8) Thinking back, if you could describe the film in three words how would you describe it?

Bad _____	Disturbing _____
Good _____	Rubbish _____
Upsetting _____	Mega _____
Amusing _____	Useful _____
Disgusting _____	Educational _____
Horrific _____	Scary _____
Boring _____	Stupid _____
Sexy _____	Angry _____
Wicked _____	

Why did you choose this words?

9) Can you remember how you felt when you watched the film? (ie. Did you feel angry/sad/ calm/excited?) What was it about the film that made you feel like that?

10) Was there a scene that made you laugh? Yes ___ No _____
If yes what scene was it?

11) Do you remember if you were bored while watching the film? Yes ____ No _____

If you were bored, can you remember what made you bored?
If you weren't bored, can you remember what stopped you from getting bored?

12) What scene in the film impressed you the most? Why?

13) What scene in the film impressed you the least? Why?

14) Did you find the film useful at all? Yes ____ No ____
If **yes** what parts did you find useful and how were they useful?

15) Do you think the film was making a point about something? Yes ____ No ___

16) What do you think about that point?

17) Do you think there was anything unjust or unfair in the film?

18) Can you remember who you would have been in the film?

19) Why would you have been this person?

20) Who do you think was the hero in the film? Why? Give an example of a scene where they were the hero.

21) Who do you think was the main bad guy in the film? Why? Give an example of a scene where they were bad.

22) What caused the hero to be violent? (The reason given for his violence) Give an example of a scene where they were violent.

23) What caused the bad guy to be violent? (The reason given for his violence) Give an example of a scene where they were violent.

24) What happened to the hero after he/she was violent? Give an example of what happened. **(Was it punished or rewarded).**

Do you think they got away with their violence?

25) What happened to the bad guy after he/she was violent? Give an example of what happened. **(Was it punished or rewarded).**

Do you think they got away with their violence?

26) Who do you consider was the most violent person in the film? Why and give an example of where they were violent?

27) Who do you consider was the least violent person in the film? Why and give an example of where they were violent?

28) Where the victim did not die, do you think the victims were harmed by the violence? Give examples of how and where you thought the victims were harmed?

29) Who came out the overall winner in the film?

30) Who came out the overall loser in the film?

31) How would you like the film to have ended?

32) Overall, what do you think were the consequences of the violence in the film? (Punishment/rewarded)

33) Overall, what caused the violence in the film?

34) Do you remember any of the actors? Yes _____ No _____

35) Have you seen the actors in anything since then? Yes ____ No _____

36) What have you seen them in?

37) Have you seen the film again in the last three months? Yes _____ No _____

If **yes**, Did you actively choose to watch it and why?

How many times have you seen the film since then? _____

If **no**, Why have you not seen it again?

38) Have you seen any similar films in the last six/nine months? Yes _____ No _____

If **yes**, what were they and how many times have you seen them? Did you see them on television/video/satellite or at the cinema?

	No. of Times
Film 1_____	_____
Film 2_____	_____
Film 3_____	_____

39) What other films have you seen in the last six/nine months? Did you see them on television/video/satellite or at the cinema?

40) What's your favourite film that you have seen in the last three months? Why is this your favourite?

_____

41) Do you consider that any of the films you have mentioned, have influenced you in any way?
Yes _____ No _____

42) In what ways have they influenced you?

43) Have you imitated or copied from these films? Yes _____ No _____

44) Which film did you imitate and what did you imitate/copy?

45) Do you consider that the film we showed you, influenced you in any way?
Yes _____ No _____

46) In what ways has it influenced you?

47) Have you imitated or copied anything from this film? Yes _____ No _____

48) What did you imitate/copy from this film?

49) How do you think the person watching the film with you was affected by it?

50) Did anything in the film remind you of anything that has ever happened to you?
Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please specify

51) Did any of the characters in the film remind you of anyone you know?
Yes ___ No ___

If so, please specify

52) How realistic was the violence in the film? In what ways was it realistic or unrealistic?

SELF-REPORT DELINQUENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate the number of times you have taken part in the following behaviours over the last three months, and indicate the frequency of occurrence by circling one of the possible responses.

1) Lied about your age to gain entrance or to purchase something; for example, lying about your age to buy alcohol or get into a movie

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

2) Skipped classes without an excuse

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

3) Cheated on school tests

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

4) Been suspended from school

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

5) Avoided paying for such things as the cinema, bus or train rides.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once every day g) 2-3 times a day

6) Bought or provided alcohol for a minor

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once every day g) 2-3 times a day

7) Been drunk in a public place.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

8) Been loud, rowdy, or unruly in a public place (disorderly conduct) **(can include inside the institution).**

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

9) Begged for money or things from strangers.

How many times (Please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

10) Taken a vehicle without the owners permission.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c)once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

11) Stolen (or tried to steal) something at school/at an institution, such as someone's coat from an institution you resided in

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

12) Stolen (or tried to steal) things worth between five and fifty pounds.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

13) Stolen money or other things from your parents or other members of your family

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

14) Stolen (or tried to steal) a motor vehicle, such as a car or motorcycle.

How many times (please write down a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

15) Knowingly bought, sold or held stolen goods (or tried to do any of these things)

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) Once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

16) Run away from home

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) Once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

17) Broken into a building or vehicle (or tried to break in) to steal something or just to look around.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

18) Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your parents or other family members.

How many times (please write down a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

19) Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to the centre/institution you are in.

How many times (please write down a number) _____ Indicate how often by

circling one of the following:

a). once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

20) Purposely damaged or destroyed property that did not belong to you (not counting the above).

How many times (please write down a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

21) Made obscene telephone calls, such as calling someone and saying dirty things

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

22) Set fire to furniture/buildings etc.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

23) Carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocket knife

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

24) Thrown objects (such as rocks or bottles) at cars or people

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

25) Been involved in gang fights.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

26) Hit (or threatened to hit) an adult in an institution

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling on of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

27) Hit (or threatened to hit) one of your parents

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling on of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

28) Hit (or threatened to hit) other people your age or younger

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling on of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

29) Used force to get money or things from other people your own age or younger

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

30) Used force to get money or other things from an adult within an institution

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

31) Used force to get money or other things from other people (not peers or institutional adults)

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

32) Attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting or killing him/her

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

33) Had (or tried to have) sexual relations with someone against their will

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

34) Sold marijuana or hashish ("pot", "grass", "hash")

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

35) Sold hard drugs, such as heroin, cocaine and LSD.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

36) Used alcohol

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

37) a) Used drugs.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past three months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

b) Which drugs have you taken?

_____

_____

38) Have you had any past convictions? Yes _____ No _____

If **yes,** how many have you had? _____

What offences were they for?

SELF-REPORT DELINQUENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate the number of times you have taken part in the following behaviours over the last nine months, and indicate the frequency of occurrence by circling one of the possible responses.

1) Lied about your age to gain entrance or to purchase something; for example, lying about your age to buy alcohol or get into a movie

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

2) Skipped classes without an excuse

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

3) Cheated on school tests

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

4) Been suspended from school

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

5) Avoided paying for such things as the cinema, bus or train rides.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once every day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

6) Bought or provided alcohol for a minor

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once every day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

7) Been drunk in a public place.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

8) Been loud, rowdy, or unruly in a public place (disorderly conduct) **(can include inside the institution).**

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

9) Begged for money or things from strangers.

How many times (Please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

10) Taken a vehicle without the owners permission.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past ninemonths b) once a month

c)once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

11) Stolen (or tried to steal) something at school/at an institution, such as someone's coat from an institution you resided in

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

12) Stolen (or tried to steal) things worth between five and fifty pounds.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

13) Stolen money or other things from your parents or other members of your family

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

14) Stolen (or tried to steal) a motor vehicle, such as a car or motorcycle.

How many times (please write down a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

15) Knowingly bought, sold or held stolen goods (or tried to do any of these things)

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) Once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

16) Run away from home

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) Once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

17) Broken into a building or vehicle (or tried to break in) to steal something or just to look around.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

18) Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your parents or other family members.

How many times (please write down a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

19) Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to the centre/institution you are in.

How many times (please write down a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

20) Purposely damaged or destroyed property that did not belong to you (not counting the above).

How many times (please write down a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

21) Made obscene telephone calls, such as calling someone and saying dirty things

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

22) Set fire to furniture/buildings etc.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

23) Carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocket knife

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

24) Thrown objects (such as rocks or bottles) at cars or people

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

25) Been involved in gang fights.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

26) Hit (or threatened to hit) an adult in an institution

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling on of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

27) Hit (or threatened to hit) one of your parents

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling on of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

28) Hit (or threatened to hit) other people your age or younger

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling on of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

29) Used force to get money or things from other people your own age or younger

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

30) Used force to get money or other things from an adult within an institution

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

31) Used force to get money or other things from other people (not peers or institutional adults)

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

32) Attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting or killing him/her

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

33) Had (or tried to have) sexual relations with someone against their will

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

34) Sold marijuana or hashish ("pot", "grass", "hash")

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

35) Sold hard drugs, such as heroin, cocaine and LSD.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a week

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

36) Used alcohol

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

37) a) Used drugs.

How many times (please write a number) _____ Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) once or twice in the past nine months b) once a month

c) once every two to three weeks d) once a week e) 2-3 times a week

f) once a day g) 2-3 times a day

Indicate how often by circling one of the following:

a) never b)once or twice in my life c) occasionally d) frequently e) very frequently

f) most of the time

b) Which drugs have you taken?

_____

_____

38) Have you had any past convictions? Yes _____ No _____

If **yes,** how many have you had? _____

What offences were they for?

APPENDIX VIII: BROWNE, K.D., AND PENNELL, A.E (1998) THE EFFECTS OF VIDEO VIOLENCE ON YOUNG OFFENDERS HOME OFFICE RESEARCH AND STATISTICS DIRECTORATE NO. 65. HOME OFFICE: LONDON

HOME OFFICE RESEARCH AND STATISTICS DIRECTORATE

RESEARCH FINDINGS No. 65

THE EFFECTS OF VIDEO VIOLENCE ON YOUNG OFFENDERS

Kevin Browne and Amanda Pennell

In 1995, the Home Office commissioned a study of the effects of video violence on young offenders. Groups of offenders and non-offenders were shown a violent video film. Immediate reactions were monitored, as well as impressions and memories of the film some while later. They were also psychologically assessed and asked about film preferences.

KEY POINTS

- More differences were found between offenders and non-offenders than between violent offenders and non-violent offenders in terms of film viewing preferences and reactions to violent films.
- Offenders spent longer watching video films than non-offenders. Violent offenders were more likely than non-violent offenders to prefer violent films.
- Ten months after viewing a violent video, twice as many offenders as non-offenders recalled and identified with vindictively violent characters.
- Offenders had a lower level of moral development than non-offenders, were less able to appreciate the viewpoints of, or empathise with, others, and were more likely to have aggressive temperaments and distorted perceptions about violence.
- The findings suggest that individuals from violent families are more prone to offending behaviour and having a preference for violent films, but this may be modified by personality and moral values.

BACKGROUND

There have been recent assertions that violent films and videos may influence young people who commit violent acts. Some people have linked over-exposure to television violence in childhood with later involvement in violent crime; others have emphasised that experiencing 'real' violence as a child has a greater impact. Ways in which screen violence may be thought to affect behaviour include:

- imitation of violent roles and aggressive acts
- triggering aggressive impulses in pre-disposed individuals
- desensitising feelings of sympathy towards victims.

A study by the Policy Studies Institute found little difference in young offenders' and school children's viewing habits (Hagell and Newburn, 1994). This suggests that to understand how violent videos influence violent behaviour, it is essential to determine what meanings and importance people ascribe to violent scenes and characters seen on film. Individual differences may reflect not what is watched but rather what is remembered.

AIMS AND METHODS OF THE STUDY

The research was concerned with whether violent young offenders do view violent videos differently from (a) non-violent offenders and (b) non-offenders. Four specific questions were addressed. Do violent young offenders:

- view video films more often than the other two groups?
- identify more often with violent scenes and characteristics?
- remember more from violent videos?
- have more violent childhood experiences which influence their video film preferences?

122 males aged between 15 and 21 years took part in the research. There were three groups:

- 54 violent offenders (all had been convicted at least once of an offence against the person)
- 28 non-violent offenders
- a control sample of 40 non-offender school/college students.

Participants were asked about their viewing habits and shown a violent video film appropriate for their age, i.e: Cert '15' or '18'. They were then interviewed about their recollections and interpretations of the film immediately afterwards, four months later and again after ten months. Participants were also assessed for family background, predisposition towards anger, empathetic concern and moral maturity. Interviews with offenders took place at two secure institutions and with non-offenders at their places of study.

CHOICE OF VIDEO AND FILM MATERIAL

Offenders spent more time watching satellite and television films: 53% watched three or more days a week whereas most school/college students (72%) watched only one or two days. Preferred programmes also differed – offenders were significantly more likely than non-offenders to choose soap operas (74% compared with 35%) and police dramas (40% compared with nil). Violent offenders were more likely than non-violent offenders to prefer police dramas.

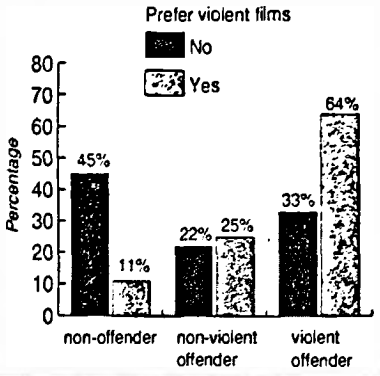
Offenders spent significantly longer watching video films than non-offenders. Nearly two-thirds watched more than two days a week compared with only 20% of school students. Non-offenders tended to prefer science fiction and comedy films. The general preference of offenders was for violent films and violent offenders were more likely than non-violent offenders to favour such films (see Figure 1). Of all those who chose violent films as their favourite, 89% were offenders and only 11% non-offenders.

An '18' certificate film was named as the favourite or last film watched by about 70% of offenders and non-offenders. There was no difference between 15-17s and 18-21s (whether offenders or not) in naming an '18' certificate video as their favourite (even though 15-17s should not legally be supplied with such films). The participants, whether or not in a secure institution, therefore appear to be watching age-inappropriate films. The violent film shown as part of the study was age-appropriate and may have been considered 'tame' in comparison to films usually watched.

IDENTIFICATION WITH FILM CHARACTERS

When asked 'if you could be anyone in a film, who would you be', similar proportions of the groups wanted to be a violent character. However, when asked 'why they would be that character', 20% of offenders but only 5% of non-offenders said 'because they were violent'. When asked to select favourite actors, two-thirds of offenders named

Figure 1 Preference for violent films



stars like Van Damme, Schwarzenegger or Stallone who typically play violent characters. Only one quarter of school/college students listed such actors. Again, this preference was more pronounced for violent offenders.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL VIOLENT VIDEO FILM

Characters in film

In the initial and four-month follow-up interviews, offenders and non-offenders were broadly similar in terms of which film character they identified with most or remembered best. But after ten months, significantly more offenders (82%) than non-offenders (43%) identified with a vindictively violent character. When asked 'why they would be that character' or 'why they remembered them the most', offenders were more likely to give reasons related to the character's violent nature.

Recalling scenes and storyline

In the follow-up interviews, there was no difference between offenders' and non-offenders' recollections of the 'gist' of the film. Offenders were slightly more likely to recall (incorrectly) the start as being violent. Violent scenes were more likely than other kinds to remain in the memories of both violent and non-violent offenders.

Attitude to the film

72% of violent offenders said that a violent part of the film excited them the most, compared with 65% of non-offenders and 35% of non-violent offenders. In the follow-up interviews, more offenders than non-offenders thought the film lacked violence (40% versus 18%) and action (39% versus 23%).

Film influences

Participants were asked about the influence on them of both the study film and any others seen since the last interview. Non-offenders were more likely to say they had copied dialogue from a film. No-one said they had copied violent behaviour from the study film. One non-offender and one offender said they had copied violent aspects of other films. Three offenders said that a film seen in the last three months had influenced them. One 'liked the idea of robbing a bank and getting away with it'

(unnamed film), another 'wanted to get a driving licence' (*Licence to Drive*) and a third 'wanted to nick a Porsche and get a gun' (*Bad Boys*).

At the four-month follow-up interview only three people (none at the ten-month interview) claimed the study film had influenced them. Two were offenders. One said 'it gave me a high afterwards' and the other 'I know to check for police when robbing' (*No Surrender* – police had caught the film characters in the act of stealing motorbikes). The non-offender said the film (*ID* – about football violence) had depressed him. One violent offender (still in prison when followed up) thought it was a good idea to slash the victim's Achilles tendons so he could not escape (as shown in *Last Gasp*).

Psychometric assessments

The film had no immediate influence on empathy or the participant's state or level of anger. However, there were pre-existing group differences in these and other respects. Offenders:

- had a lower level of moral development
- were less able to appreciate others' viewpoints or empathise
- were more likely to have aggressive temperaments and distorted perceptions about violent behaviour.

These differences indicate that low moral development and distorted perceptions about violence underlie preferences for violent films and violent film characters. Low empathic concern plus higher aggression could lead to individuals seeking out violent films for entertainment. Films may then reinforce these thoughts and feelings, creating more entrenched cognitive and behaviour patterns. Nevertheless, the study provides little evidence that offenders were more influenced by the experimental film than non-offenders, although they did recall vindictively violent characters twice as often.

VIOLENT CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES AND FILM PREFERENCES

Participants were asked how conflicts at home were typically resolved, ranging from 'reasoning behaviour' to 'severe violence'. Highly significant differences emerged between the groups in the use of violent behaviour to resolve parent-child conflicts. Violent offenders had most often suffered violence from both parents and responded aggressively (see Figure 2). Non-violent offenders tended to have experienced violence more from their fathers/step-fathers than their mothers. Offenders were also more likely to have witnessed inter-parental violence. Non-offenders both witnessed and suffered family violence less often than the other two groups . These findings support the victim-to-offender concept – i.e. that victims may be particularly prone to become offenders – and highlight the possible influence of home violence on violent film preferences.

Multivariate analysis confirmed that personality and social background were more important in identifying those who commit offences than factors associated with violent films. Table 1 lists characteristics which discriminated offenders in the study (whether violent or non-violent) from non-offenders, ranked according to the strength of association with offending behaviour.

Figure 2 Victims of family violence by groups

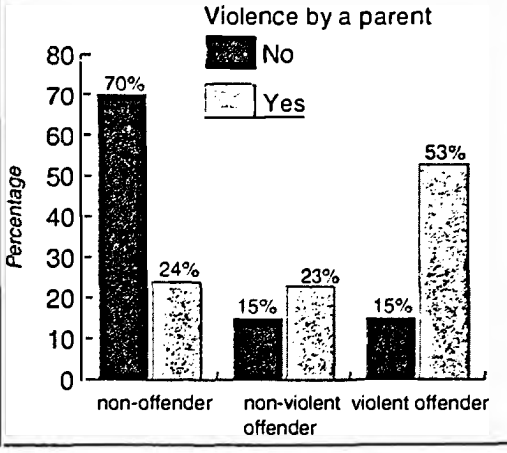
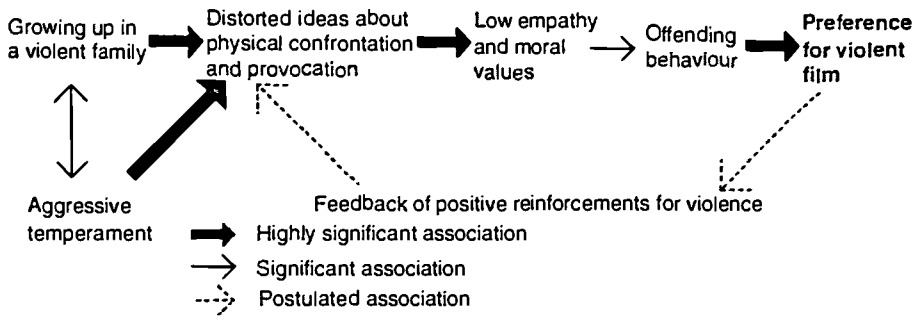


Table 1 Characteristics which discriminated offenders from non-offenders ranked in decreasing order of importance

- Physical confrontational thoughts
- Stepfather present (previous family breakdown)
- Angry temperament
- Low level of moral development
- Low empathy score
- Parental violence to young person
- Low intellectual ability
- Preference for violent films
- Young person violent to parents
- Young person witness to spouse violence
- Favourite actor plays violent roles
- Identification with 'bad guy' in film
- Film lacks violent action
- Poor reading ability
- Violent reason for remembering actor in film

A theoretical model is proposed in Figure 3. This is based on the findings that a history of family violence, distorted thoughts about physical confrontation, low empathy and poor moral development are associated directly or indirectly with offending and a preference for violent films. Through growing up in a violent family, young people are more likely to witness, be victims of and perpetrate aggressive acts after seeing real violence in their homes. The victim-to-offender concept, following on from physical and emotional maltreatment as a child, is well established. However, only one in six victims become offenders. Lack of an angry temperament or high empathy and moral standards may act as protective factors (Browne and Herbert, 1997).

Figure 3 A tentative model for the development of preferences for violent films



CONCLUSIONS

Previous research has suggested that viewing violent television is a precursor to violent behaviour. In contrast, this study suggests that the well-established link between poor social background and delinquent behaviour extends to the development of a preference for violent films. This, in turn, may reinforce distorted perceptions about appropriate means of resolving conflict and responding to frustration and provocation. Indeed, in the absence of parental violence there was no significant relationship between offending and a preference for violent film or characters. When parental violence was present, offenders and non-offenders differed significantly, with offenders distinctly preferring violent film and characters. The implication is that both a history of family violence and offending behaviour are necessary pre-conditions for developing a significant preference for violent film action and role models.

The research cannot prove whether video violence causes crime. Nevertheless, it does show that, when factors associated with offending are present (e.g. growing up in a violent family, aggressive personality, distorted perceptions about conflict resolution, lack of empathy and morals), a preference for violent films and characters can distinguish offenders. However, no firm predictive claims can be made without examining future offending behaviour.

Fewer differences emerged between violent offenders and non-violent offenders than between offenders generally and non-offenders. However, violent childhood experiences did distinguish violent and non-violent offenders, and violent offenders were more likely to prefer violent films. The research highlights the importance of family background and the offender's own personality and thoughts in determining the effects of film violence. This research confirms that video film violence is seen differently by young offenders, especially those from violent homes. Offenders were more likely to prefer actors who typically play characters whose use of severe violence appears positive and successful – a dangerous role model for young people, particularly those predisposed to crime and delinquency. There is some evidence that young people do imitate films (e.g., the Black Museum at Scotland Yard has a copy made by a young offender of the deadly glove used by Freddie Kruger in *Nightmare on Elm Street*) but there is no firm evidence of the extent of such copycat behaviour.

Overall, the research points to a pathway from having a violent home background, to being an offender, to being more likely to prefer violent films and violent actors. Distorted perceptions about violent behaviour, poor empathy for others and low moral development all enhance the adoption of offending behaviour and violent film preferences.

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Kevin Browne and Amanda Pennell are members of the Forensic Psychology Group, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham.

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APPENDIX IX: PENNELL, A.E. AND BROWNE, K.D. (1998) YOUNG OFFENDERS' SUSCEPTIBILITY TO VIOLENT MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT, IMPLICATIONS FOR SECURE INSTITUTIONS PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL, 120, 23-27.

Young Offenders' Susceptibility to Violent Media Entertainment

Implications for Secure Institutions

Amanda Pennell, *Bsc(Hons)* and **Kevin Browne**, *PhD, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, B15 2TT and Glenthorne Youth Treatment Centre, Birmingham, B24 9SA*

Abstract

An investigation as to the effects of video violence on young offenders was commissioned by the Home Office Research and Statistics Directorate in 1995. Groups of offenders and non-offenders were shown a violent video film and their immediate reactions were recorded together with their impressions and memories of the film three months and ten months later. Offenders spent longer watching video films than non-offenders and violent offenders were more likely to prefer violent films and identify with violent characters. This finding was related to the fact that violent offenders were more often from violent family backgrounds. The implications of this research for secure institutions is discussed in terms of young offenders being most vulnerable to the adverse effects of watching violent media entertainment.

Introduction

In the UK, the whole debate as to whether violence in the media has a damaging impact on its audience was highlighted in 1993 with the murder of James Bulger by two ten year old boys. The similarity between certain aspects of this crime and parts of the video 'Child's Play 3' made people believe that this violent film had *caused* the individuals concerned to commit the terrible crime.

Despite claims that it is dangerous to oversimplify and ignore the complex causes of antisocial behaviour, such as growing up in a violent home or living in a violent community, some researchers (for example Professor Elizabeth Newson of the University of Nottingham) still vehemently believe that there is an established causal relationship between violent videos and criminal behaviour.

By contrast, there are the researchers who contest that a harmful link exists between violent screen images and aggressive behaviour (for example Dr Guy Cumberbatch of Worcester University College). Between these two extremities of opinion, there are the researchers who provide evidence for a link which varies in strength depending on the characteristics of the audience. In fact, the most accurate conclusion which can be drawn from an overview of the research is that an association between viewing violent films and aggressive behaviour does exist.

Various theories as to the way screen violence can influence behaviour have arisen and include the following:

- Imitation of violent characters and violent actions;
- A reduction of inhibitions about using violence;
- Becoming desensitised to violence and therefore being more acceptable of real-life violence.

One of the main focuses of research in this area is that the influence of violence on the screen is not universal; that is, it does not have the same impact on the audience as a whole. People can view the same piece of violent material, but depending on

personality characteristics, temperament and moral development, they can come away with very different attitudes and more importantly, different ideas from what they have just seen. A major concern about viewing violent material arises when the person watching it is already predisposed to being aggressive.

Browne and Herbert (1997)[1] claim that there are certain factors associated with having a violent predisposition such as poor parental role-models, being inconsistently disciplined and being a victim of violent parents. They go on to describe that these factors can lead to the child developing a low level of morality and even becoming a delinquent. In turn, a limited moral development can lead to the child interpreting screen images in a distorted manner and being particularly susceptible to the violent images they are viewing.

Theories about the influence of violent material on thought processes of the viewer also imply there is a dangerous element to aggressive children and teenagers watching violent TV and video films. They may observe similar ideas, thoughts and feelings to those they already hold about the use of violence (for example to obtain sexual experiences). Thus, scenes and personal thoughts may then become connected and when a violent image is seen, it can 'prime' an individual, already aggressively predisposed, into aggressive actions (see Berkowitz, 1993).[2]

The suggestion that there exists a vulnerable audience who are more readily influenced by what they see, has led to a concentration on offenders for some of the media violence research, with particular reference to young violent offenders.

To fully understand which people are susceptible to screen violence it is also necessary to take a 'cognitive' approach by explaining how people understand what they watch and how they evaluate what they see in terms of their own moral understanding.

Indeed, English research which compared only the viewing habits of young offenders in the community and school children found that little difference existed (see Hagell and Newburn, 1994).[3] Therefore, it is the question of **'how they watch'** rather than **'what they watch'** which needs to be addressed.

The authors' current research, which is sponsored by the Home Office (see Browne and Pennell, 1998),[4] is based on the notion that for some vulnerable individuals the viewing of screen violence is unhealthy. The research places particular emphasis on the moral development, aggressive temperament and family violence history as these are believed to be both direct and indirect influencing factors on how an individual will interpret and be affected by what they see on the screen.

The Home Office Research Project

The research is based on a study of 122 males aged between 15 and 21 years, divided into three groups of 54 violent offenders, 28 non-violent offenders and 40 non-offenders (school/college students). The offenders were all currently under the jurisdiction of the Home Office (in a YOI) or the Department of Health (in a secure unit).

Non-violent offenders were those who had no current violent offences and had no previous history of violent offending. Violent offenders (including sexually violent offenders) were those who had either a current violent offence or had preconvictions for violent assaults. Non-violent offences committed by people in the study were: car thefts; theft from vehicles and shops; burglary (both residential and business); receiving or handling stolen goods; drug dealing or possession; fraud; criminal damage; arson (not endangering life); driving offences; perverting the course of justice; and absconding. Violent offences committed by the participants included ABH, s.18 or s.20 wounding (GBH), assaulting a police officer, robbery, manslaughter, rape and murder. The most serious offences were committed by a very small number of people in the sample: less than one per cent of the young offenders had committed a murder, nearly two per cent had committed a manslaughter and less than one per cent had committed a rape. The participants were:

i) Interviewed about their viewing habits (for example, favourite television programmes and films) and given two questionnaires to measure for aggressive temperament and empathic concern.
ii) Shown a video (which was age-appropriate) which contained violent scenes, during which any behaviours displayed by the participants were recorded on to a computer.
iii) Interviewed about their memory and interpretation of the video film they had just viewed (for example, what scene or character they remembered most); and again, given questionnaires to assess their level of aggression and empathy after viewing the film.
iv) Assessed on moral development, intelligence, emotional stability and asked if they had ever experienced violence from their parents while resolving a disagreement.
v) Followed up at 3-4 months after the initial interview and at 9-10 months to assess their memory and interpretation of the violent film they were originally shown.

The aims of the study were to determine the differences between violent young offenders, non-violent young offenders and non-offenders, in relation to the following:

1. The choice of video and film material watched.
2. The scenes and characters identified within the film.
3. What is remembered or forgotten from the violent video film, both immediately after viewing and at follow-up.
4. What is remembered from the video in relation to childhood experiences and previous and current offending.

Research findings

Overall, more differences were found between offenders and non-offenders than more specifically, between violent and non-

1. **Browne, K. D.** and **Herbert, M.** (1997) *Preventing Family Violence.* Chichester: Wiley.
2. **Berkowitz, L.** (1993) *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences and Control.* New York: McGraw Hill.
3. **Hagell, A.** and **Newburn, T.** (1994) *Young Offenders and the Media: Viewing Habits and Preferences.* London: Policy Studies Institute.
4. **Browne, K. D.** and **Pennell, A. E.** (1998) The Effects of Video Violence on Young Offenders. *Home Office Research and Statistics Directorate, Research Findings No. 65* London: Home Office.

violent offenders in terms of what they chose to watch and their memory for the violent film they viewed.

Viewing Habits:

There were significant differences between the groups in their viewing habits. Offenders spent a greater amount of days a week watching TV films than the non-offenders and indeed had different viewing preferences from the comparison group. Of all those individuals who named a police programme as their favourite; 66 per cent were violent offenders with the remaining 34 per cent being non-violent offenders. In sharp contrast to this, no school/college students named a police programme as their favourite (see Figure One).

Differences also emerged in the favourite type of film chosen. Of all the people who chose a violent film, 89 per cent were offenders with the remaining 11 per cent being the non offenders. The offenders were also more likely to say that the reason they liked the violent film was because they liked to see violence. This differentiation carried through in relation to violent characters in films with the majority of offenders choosing a violent actor such as Jean Claude van Damme or Steven Siegel as their favourite, compared to a minority of the non-offender group.

Psychological Questionnaires

With reference to the questionnaires administered, offenders were less able to take another person's perspective or to feel empathy. Empathy in fact, decreased with anti-social and violent behaviour as the non-offenders scored the highest for empathy, followed by the non-violent offenders and finally, the violent offenders who had the lowest level. The reverse was true for angry temperaments as violent offenders scored higher on the anger temperament scale than the other two groups; indicating they were more likely to express their anger than both non-violent offenders and non-offenders.

Behavioural Reactions

The behavioural reactions to the film are still being analysed and a full report is due out later this year.

Memory and Interpretation of Video Film:

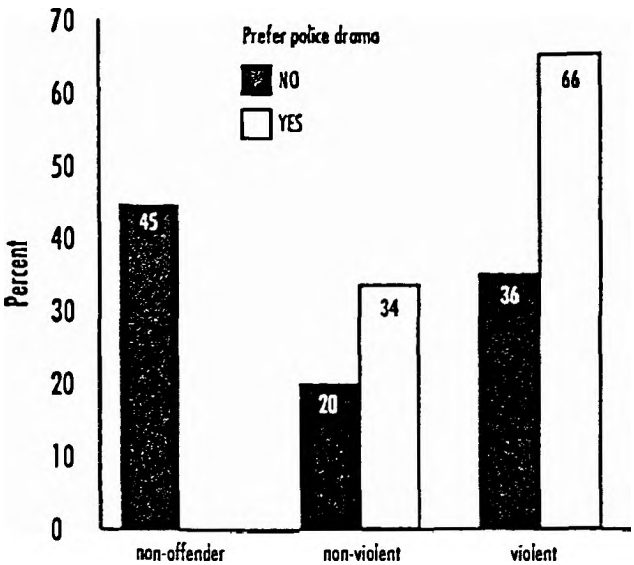
In the initial interview and three to four month follow-up interview, there was little difference between the offender and non-offender groups in the characters they recalled from the film. However, in the nine to ten month follow-up interview, twice as many offenders as non-offenders recalled and identified with vindictively violent characters.

Surprisingly, there was little difference between the offenders and non-offenders in the type of scenes they recalled; with violent scenes being recalled most frequent by both groups.

Moral Development:

It was found that school/college students had higher levels of moral development than both the offender groups. In the same way as empathy, moral development decreased with anti-social and violent behaviour as more violent offenders (83 per cent) than non-violent offenders had a low level of morality (68 per cent) while the majority of students (63 per cent) had a high level of morality based on the measurement used.

Figure 1: Preference for Police Dramas by Groups (N=93)



Family Violence:

In terms of violence experienced in their home environment, 46 per cent of non-offenders, 79 per cent of non-violent offenders and 90 per cent of violent offenders were at least pushed, shoved and slapped by their parents.

In the case of the more extreme violence (severe), over 66 per cent of violent offenders, nearly 50 per cent of non-violent offenders and under 20 per cent of students had experienced physical abuse in their family home. This violence was also reciprocal, so that in many instances where violence occurred to the young person it would also be retaliated against towards the parent in question.

A higher proportion of violent offenders witnessed some form of violence between their parental figures than the other two groups. In addition, more non-violent offenders than non-offenders witnessed violence.

Factor Associated with Offenders:

One of the analyses carried out provided a list of the characteristics which could distinguish between offenders and non-offenders. Factors associated with offenders were listed in order of importance at being most successful at distinguishing the two groups (see Table One).

Discussion

The findings of the study demonstrate that the most important factors to predict offenders are; violent family background, aggressive personality, distorted cognitions about aggression and low empathic concern and poor moral development. Violent films also are predictive of people who commit offences, but to a lesser degree. Therefore, it can be claimed that factors linked to film violence can help to distinguish offenders from non-offenders, although the positioning of these film-related factors in the above list shows that the predictive

Table One: Characteristics which discriminated offenders from non-offenders ranked in decreasing order of importance (from Browne and Pennell, 1998).

•	Physical Confrontational Thoughts
•	Step-father Present (previous family breakdown)
•	A high trait level of anger
•	Low level of moral development
•	Low level of empathy
•	Parental violence to young person
•	Low intellectual ability
•	Preference for violent films
•	Young person violent to parents
•	Young person witness spouse violence
•	Favourite actor plays violent roles
•	Identification with 'bad guy' in film
•	Film lacks violent action
•	Poor reading ability
•	Violent reason for remembering actor in film

value of violent film and character preferences is limited and lower than other personality and background characteristics. Hence, they are less reliable.

Thus, the findings of this study support the concept of victim to offender (when a person who has been victimised goes on to victimise others) and highlights how violence in the home can influence violent film preferences. A higher percentage of offenders than non-offenders had been victims of violence at the hands of their parents and had more often responded with aggression to their parents. It does have to be recognised however that not all victims of violence in the home become offenders as personality characteristics can act as protective factors (see Falshaw, Browne and Hollin, 1996).[5]

Practical Implications

The findings of this research has shown that victims of family violence are more likely to be involved in criminal activity than those from non-violent homes. Furthermore, those individuals who commit offences show a greater preference for violent film entertainment and remember violent film characters more often up to ten months after viewing a video film. It can be argued that such preferences and memories for violent film reinforce distorted ideas about physical confrontation and the use of violence when provoked. Hence, the chances of committing a violent act increases which may lead to a greater frequency of aggressive incidents for individuals predisposed to violence. Therefore, one of the most important considerations from this Home Office research project is the availability of violent images to those people who are already known to have committed violent acts.

It is recognised that the censorship and control of violent and sexual imagery in media entertainment is sensitive and controversial. Indeed, with the advent of the Internet it is difficult to filter out undesirable and disturbing images from the population as a whole. Therefore, in the community, restricting access of violent material to aggressively predisposed individuals is virtually impossible. However, this is not the case for those young offenders who have been placed in secure accommodation and young offender institutions where staff can exercise discretion over what the residents may watch. Indeed, the Secretary of State's Youth Treatment Service Group (Department of Health), chaired by Winifred Tumim, recommended in their Third Annual Report published in October 1995:

> *'That steps be taken to review the amount of time spent by the young people (in the secure centre) watching TV and, in particular, that a much greater degree of control be exercised over their access to inappropriate television programmes and videos'*
>
> pp. 18.

It was observed, whilst carrying out the research in two secure environments, that restrictions were placed on the times that young offenders could watch television and films due to the daily regime of the institution. However, there appeared to be relatively few restrictions on the material they viewed in terms of its content or whether it was age-appropriate. It was noted that in the secure institutions where the study took place, young offenders were watching satellite television or 'adult' video films (Cert. 18) on the juvenile wings. However, the authors are pleased to confirm that this situation was rectified once the situation was brought to the attention of the staff.

Obviously, a balance has to be drawn between managing residents' behaviour by incentives (such as allowing an inmate to have greater access to television and choosing their own video films as a reward for good behaviour) and the adverse effect of viewing inappropriate material. Indeed, the general issue of the availability of unsuitable media entertainment seems to be a subject that has not been adequately thought through in most secure environments run by local authorities, the Department of Health and the Home Office Prison Service.

A justification for firm and clear recommendations on media entertainment for incarcerated young offenders is that aggressively predisposed individuals with violent childhoods are a 'vulnerable audience' to the effects of video and film violence. Therefore, to allow individuals with a record of violent acts to be 'entertained' by violent imagery seems to be misguided and may weaken any positive treatment effects of formal programmes, such as anger-management groups.

Conclusions

It could be argued that all violent screen imagery and explicit police dramas, even those that are age-appropriate, should be censored from this vulnerable group. This would safe-guard against such material reinforcing ideas on criminal acts, and the distorted thoughts about the use of violence already held, in those individuals predisposed to offending behaviour.

An alternative is to educate rather than simply censor.

5. **Falshaw, L., Browne, K. D.** and **Hollin, C. R.** (1996) Victim to Offender: A Review. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 1, 389–404.

Ideally, media education should begin in childhood and there is a need to teach parents that they are responsible for their child's mental, as well as physical, health and well-being and this includes age-appropriate viewing of television and video film in the home. In the school environment, violence on the screen can be critically appraised, in terms of its realism, justification and consequences, under the guidance of a teacher.

Similarly, there are also educational implications for secure institutions. Media images are a powerful medium with which to teach offenders the consequences of violence which is so often under-played in 'Hollywood Blockbusters'. This could be introduced as part of anger management programmes or an equivalent programme to counteract the often detrimental 'education' that these vulnerable individuals have received through adverse experiences during their childhood and in their current lives ■

Children in Prison

Sir William Utting — *formerly Chief Inspector of Social Services at the Department of Health*

The report of the review of safeguards for children living away from home, 'People Like Us'[1], was published in November 1997. The review was commissioned by government as part of its response to continuing revelations of abuse in children's homes in the past. Its remit, which made special reference to foster care and boarding schools as well as to children's homes, extended to all children living away from home in England and Wales. In the event, the review was able to give some limited attention to children in hospitals and the penal system in addition to the principal settings.

The main points of interest in the report for the Prison Service derive from its placing children in prison in the context of all other children living away from home. The principal dangers for these children arise from career paedophiles infiltrating the system, other adults and children exploiting the conditions of residential life to abuse or harm them, and the organisational failures which prevent institutions achieving their primary goals. The review recommends an overall strategy which requires:

- a management committed to overall excellence, the welfare of children and the exposure of abuse;
- a threshold to residential employment which is high enough to deter committed abusers;
- easier transmission of information about people unfitted to work with children;
- disciplinary and criminal procedures which deal effectively with offenders.

The review used information about children in the penal system from research reports and interviews. It drew heavily on the reports of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, whose magisterial overview of young offenders was published on the same day as 'People Like Us'. The Children Act 1989 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provided the framework of values for the review. The Convention (to which the UK is a party) says, for example, 'Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age', and requires signatories to take all appropriate measures to protect the child 'from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment'. The overriding purpose of The Children Act is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. It aims to achieve this through collaborative work between the civil courts, the local authority, parents, children and all relevant agencies. It may be difficult to think of some young offenders as children, but until they reach the age of 18, they are.

The Convention and the Act have noble aims. How are they achieved for children in our penal system? How does the situation of those children compare with others living away from home? It was estimated during the review that there were 2,600 prisoners aged 17 and under in Prison Service establishments — twice the figure recorded only four years before — of whom one quarter might be boys on remand. They form only a tiny part of the 200,000 children living away from home in England and Wales. Nevertheless, the conditions in which children live in the penal system attracted disproportionate and generally unfavourable comment.

Some of this — about conditions on remand — was anecdotal and concerned relatively few cases. Children were said to be allocated to wherever a vacancy could be found, sometimes at great distance from home and family, over-crowded, in local prisons, sharing accommodation (even cells) with adults, moving around the system without access to educational or leisure facilities. Such conditions do not need to be widespread to constitute a public scandal and an obvious falling away from the basic requirements of the Convention.

Of course, children on remand should not be in the penal system at all. Section 60 of The Criminal Justice Act 1991 ended the remands of children to prison; and the last thing the Prison Service ought to be burdened with in its absurdly stressed state is a group with such pressing and specialised needs. Section 60 has not been implemented because the increase in local authority secure accommodation which was sanctioned and achieved has not kept pace with the growth in remands to custody. The review calls this a serious failure in public policy. I believe it to be a failure both of resource allocation (secure accommodation costs significantly more than prison) and of political will to confront the situation that arose. That is, until now: the Crime and Disorder Bill seems to provide for a belated approach to

1 *'People Like Us: The Report of the Review of the Safeguards for Children living away from Home'* is published by The Stationery Office at £25. A free summary is available from Department of Health, PO Box 410, Wetherby LS23 7LN.